# PNP: 9 dead, 11 hurt in poll-related violence

STORY ON PAGE A2

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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## GMA asked: Free 25 on Int'l Women's Day

By Jowel F. Canuday
*PDI Mindanao Bureau*

DAVAO CITY—The militant women's group Gabriela yesterday urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to order the release of 25 women and children being held as political prisoners on the occasion of International Women's Day today.

GMA/ A14

## RP Asia's best booth in Berlin int'l travel fair

BERLIN—The highly energized Philippine pavilion was adjudged best booth in Asia in the ongoing Internationale Tourismus Borse (ITB), a major world travel event and premier venue to attract European markets.

The award was given by the Pacific-Asia Travel Association, Europe chapter and received for the Philippines by Tourism Secretary Rich-

RP/ A14

# PPC leads Puwersa, 8-5, in latest survey

## CBCP: Don't limit choices to GMA senatorial bets

INVESTORS GALORE

President Macapagal, former President Ramos, Vice President Guingona (extreme right) and Trade Secretary Mar Roxas welcome Japan External Trade Office Chair Noburu Hatakeyama and members of his delegation.

JOAN BONDOC

By Christine Avendaño, Juliet L. Javellana and Norman Bordadora

**NOT 13-0, as President Macapagal-Arroyo keeps hoping. But it's 8-5 in favor of the senatorial candidates of the administration's People Power Coalition, according to results of a recent nationwide survey conducted by the Social Weather Stations (SWS).**

Five of the candidates in the Magic 13 are from the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino and Puwersa ng Masa.

The survey, commissioned by the PPC and conducted on Feb. 22-25, covered 1,500 respondents of voting age.

### 14 IN MAGIC 13

**1. De Castro 2. Flavier**
**3. (tie) Arroyo, Drilon**
**5. Magsaysay 6. Osmeña**
**7. Pangilinan 8. Recto**
**9. Lacson 10. Santiago**
**11. (tie) Villar, Angara**
**13. (tie) Honasan, Enrile**

Despite the SWS survey, President Macapagal yesterday insisted that a 13-0 win for the PPC was still possible.

"I believe the intelligent, upright Bulakeños would not be ashamed of voting for all 13 candidates of the PPC," Ms Macapagal said in a rally at the provincial engineering office in Guiguinto, Bulacan.

Ms Macapagal said a 13-0 sweep for the administration was in order after the Supreme Court unanimously declared her last week the country's legitimate President and not her disgraced predecessor, Joseph Estrada.

PPC/ A14

## Macapagal choice of AFP chief draws flak

By Andrea T. Echavez and Armand N. Nocum

THE APPOINTMENT of Lt. Gen. Diomedio Villanueva as the new Armed Forces chief of staff foreshadows a bleak future for the state of peace and human rights in the country, militant groups warned yesterday.

The Moro Christian People's Alliance (MCPA) said the appointment tended to contradict President Macapagal-Arroyo's earlier statement that she would pursue an "all-out peace" policy and push for "healing."

"How can the government possibly pursue a policy of peace as avowed by the President during her inaugural speech when the very implementors of the all-out war policy are not only still there but are also the ones leading the AFP?" MCPA spokesperson Amirah Ali Lidasan told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Villanueva headed the Southern Command during the war waged last year by the Estrada administration against the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

The Khadidja Moro Women in

MACAPAGAL/ A14

## BSP to step up fight vs dirty money

BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura yesterday said the BSP was stepping up its fight against money laundering with more proposals to scrutinize bank accounts, including foreign currency deposits.

Buenaventura said the BSP was seeking authority to look into deposits of more than P50 million in suspect individual bank accounts.

According to him, the BSP and the Bankers Association of the Philippines were also working on guidelines that would allow banks and regulators to examine foreign currency deposit accounts.

The central bank would seek to

BSP/ A14

### BUENAVENTURA TALKS

## RP was on brink of debt moratorium

NOW, it can be told. Had Joseph Estrada stayed on as President beyond February, the country could have suffered an economic crisis as severe as that during the last years of the Marcos dictatorship.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura disclosed yesterday that foreign banks cut off credit lines to the Philippines at the height of the country's political crisis last December.

Buenaventura said the country was teetering on the brink of declaring a debt moratorium when Edsa People Power II broke out and ended the political crisis with Estrada's bloodless ouster on Jan. 20.

"Our access to credit had already been cut off in December," he told a meeting of the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines.

"Banks were no longer willing to increase their exposure in the Philippines because of fears that we would have a violent transition.

"We tried to explain we are not a violent people. But how do you answer a foreign fund manager who commented—'Governor, there's always a first time?'"

Lack of fresh credit and looming debt obligations put the central bank in a tough spot, Buenaventura said.

"We had a buffer but sooner or

RP ON BRINK/ A14

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IREHIS

A SURPRISE visit by President Macapagal Wednesday night with the Akbayan youths camped outside the Comelec boosts their cause for the holding of a special registration for first-time voters.

VAL HANDUMON

## Puwersa: Escape stories 'baseless'

By Armand N. Nocum, Dona Pazzibugan and Volt Contreras

INFURIATED by reports that embattled former President Joseph Estrada tried to slip out of the country last week, the Puwersa ng Masang Pilipino accused the government and an unnamed newspaper of floating "baseless stories," despite military intelligence information to the contrary.

The group issued the statement as a Malacañang official laughed off Jose Victor "JV" Ejercito's claim that Cabinet members had tried to convince Estrada to leave the country.

"It must be wishful thinking or he must be hallucinating," presidential spokesperson Renato Corona said of Ejercito, Estrada's son by Guia Gomez.

Under round-the-clock surveillance by government agents and facing a likely second defeat in the Supreme Court, the ousted President canceled a plan to join the PMP's first foray into the Visayas this week, days after personally leading campaign sorties in Mindanao and Palawan.

PUWERSA/ A13

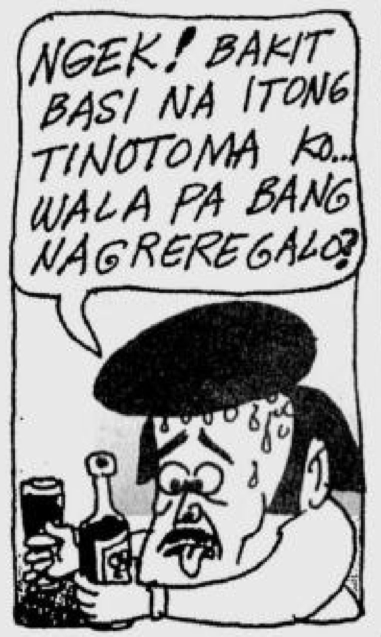
## *Erap runs out of ₱60,000 Petrus wine*

By Volt Contreras

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada is apparently tightening his belt nowadays, and it shows in his weight and his wine, according to one of his close friends.

Since he was ousted from Malacañang, Estrada has lost about 25 pounds, apparently from stress and a waning appetite, said the friend, a frequent visitor to the former first family's home on Polk Street in North Greenhills, San Juan.

ERAP/ A13



NGEK! BAKIT BASI NA ITONG TINOTOMA KO... WALA PA BANG NAGREREGALO?

## GSIS purchase of crony stock probed

ANOTHER businessman-crony of disgraced President Joseph Estrada is being eyed by the Department of Justice as a witness against him.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez said he could not reveal the name of the possible witness "because every time we reveal the name they get afraid."

But the next witness could be William Gatchalian, owner of Wellex Group.

Perez said the DOJ would look into the allegation of Federico C. Pascual, former president of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS), that Estrada had ordered him to buy shares of Waterfront Philippines Inc.

Waterfront is part of the Wellex Group, which received a P500-million loan from Estrada last year through his "Jose Velarde" account with the Equitable PCI Bank.

The investment management agreement between Estrada and Equitable PCI Bank showed that Waterfront had offered him 450 million shares as collateral for the P500-million loan.

Waterfront owns the Davao Insular Hotel, Waterfront Mactan Casino Hotel, Waterfront Cebu City Casino Hotel and Fort Ilocandia Resort Hotel.

As of June 30, 2000, Mary Joy R. Melendres, a mistress of Estrada, was listed as one of the shareholders of Waterfront.

Pascual had earlier said that as with Belle Corp. he did not want GSIS to acquire shares of Waterfront.

"Were it not for the directive of then President Estrada, the GSIS would not have acquired such a large volume of Belle Corp. shares

GSIS/ A13

# Second FRONT PAGE

ANG AGA PA, BAKA LUMALA PA!!!

## Biazon fears cheating

SEN. Rodolfo Biazon yesterday urged the Commission on Elections to look into reports that there was "excessive" production of election materials and paraphernalia to be used by candidates who will attempt to cheat in the May 14 elections.

Biazon, alleged victim of vote shaving or *"dagdag-bawas"* in the 1995 senatorial elections, wants the Comelec to look into the quantity of the production of ballots, post election report documents such as statements of votes and certificates of canvass as well as ballot boxes that would be deployed in municipalities, cities and provinces in the May polls.

"I have reports that certain candidates are intending to cheat in the elections by replacing ballot boxes," he told a news briefing.

In a statement he issued to reporters, he said that there were ballot boxes already stuffed with prepared ballots and will be used to replace those to be used in the May polls.

# Poll violence toll: 9 dead

By Carlito Pablo

**AT LEAST nine persons have been killed and 11 others wounded in political violence throughout the country since campaigning began for the May 14 general elections.**

This was disclosed yesterday by Philippine National Police chief Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza, who said authorities have also confiscated 788 unlicensed firearms since Jan. 2.

"We are still in the preliminary period," Mendoza said, adding that he expects the violence to escalate when the campaign for local positions officially begins on March 31.

Mendoza said that since Jan. 2, the original date for the start of the campaign for national posts, 11 election-related incidents were recorded which resulted in the nine deaths. He did not elaborate.

Mendoza was interviewed at Camp Aguinaldo following a meeting to discuss poll security with officials of the Commission on Elections and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. The date of the campaign for national seats was moved to Feb. 12 following the extension of the deadline for the filing of candidacies of senate aspirants.

According to Agence France Presse, the latest election-related incident occurred Monday when alleged hired henchmen of a local official killed mayoral candidate Amer Sarip in Pantao Ragat town, Lanao del Norte. The suspects remain at large.

"We are ready for any eventuality," Mendoza said.

He said the government has classified 558 towns and cities throughout the Philippines as "critical areas," with 21 localities described as ``areas of immediate concern" and 537 others as ``areas of concern."

Areas of immediate concern are those where communist or secessionist rebels operate, while areas of concern are localities where private armies controlled by local politicians hold sway and the polls are expected to be hotly contested.

Mendoza did not identify the areas, however.

AFP Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim said 91 private armies, most of them based in Mindanao, will be broken up by the military and the police.

The number is far lower than the police figure of 500 private armed groups, which will be reportedly deployed during the campaign to terrorize the electorate into voting for their candidates.

Calimlim said soldiers would also be deputized as election inspectors in some areas in Mindanao where insurgencies are ongoing and remote municipalities where schoolteachers have refused to be deployed.

More than 17,000 elective posts are up for grabs in the May 14 elections, including 13 seats in the 24-member Senate and all 250 seats in the House of Representatives.

*With AFP report*

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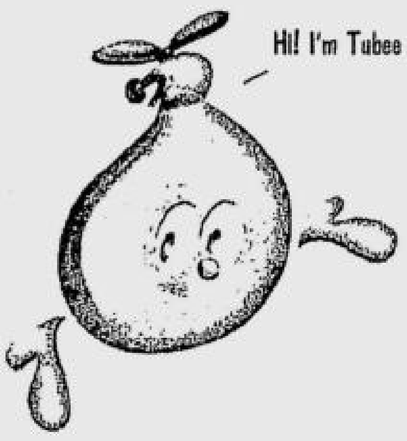

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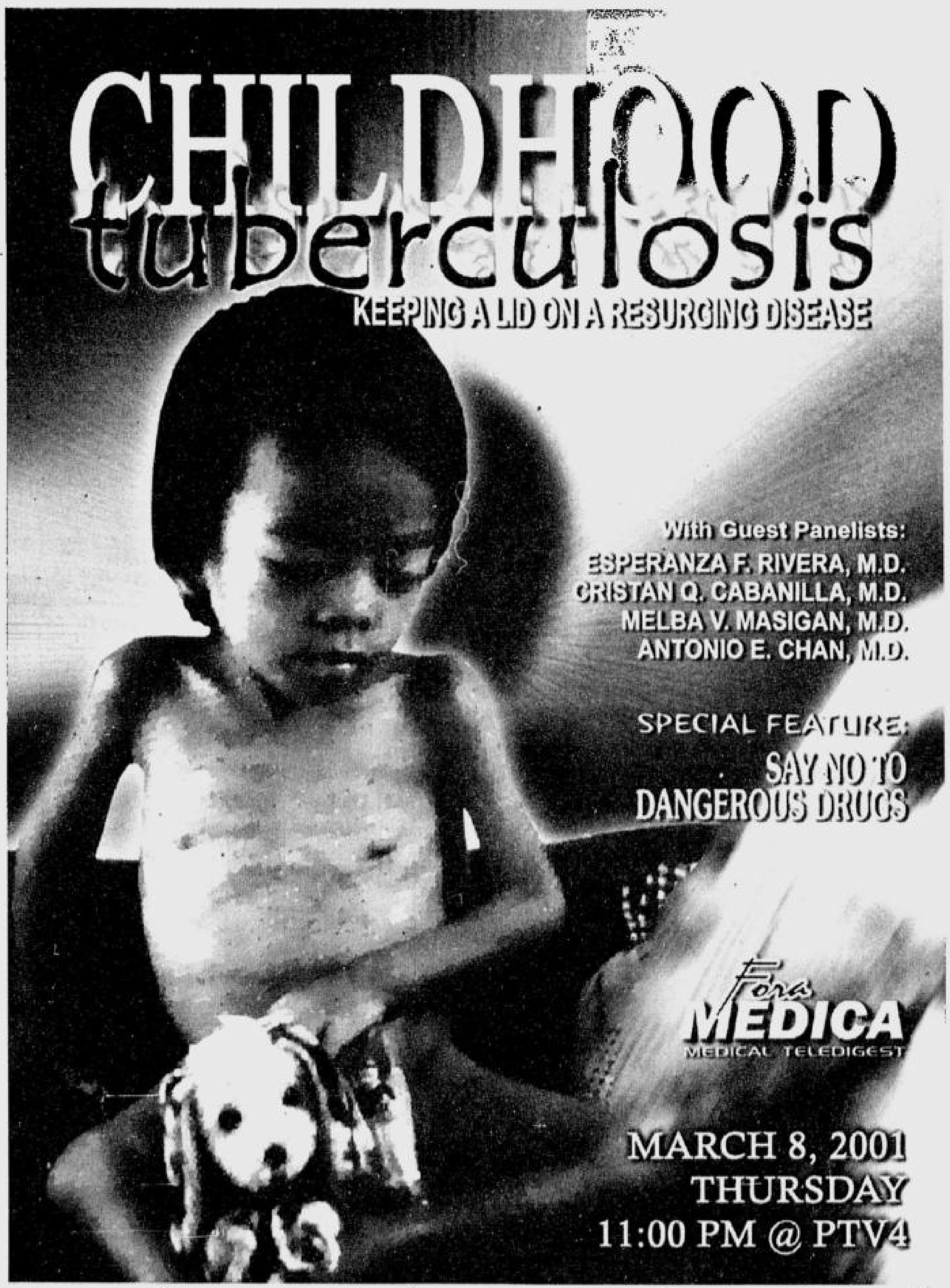

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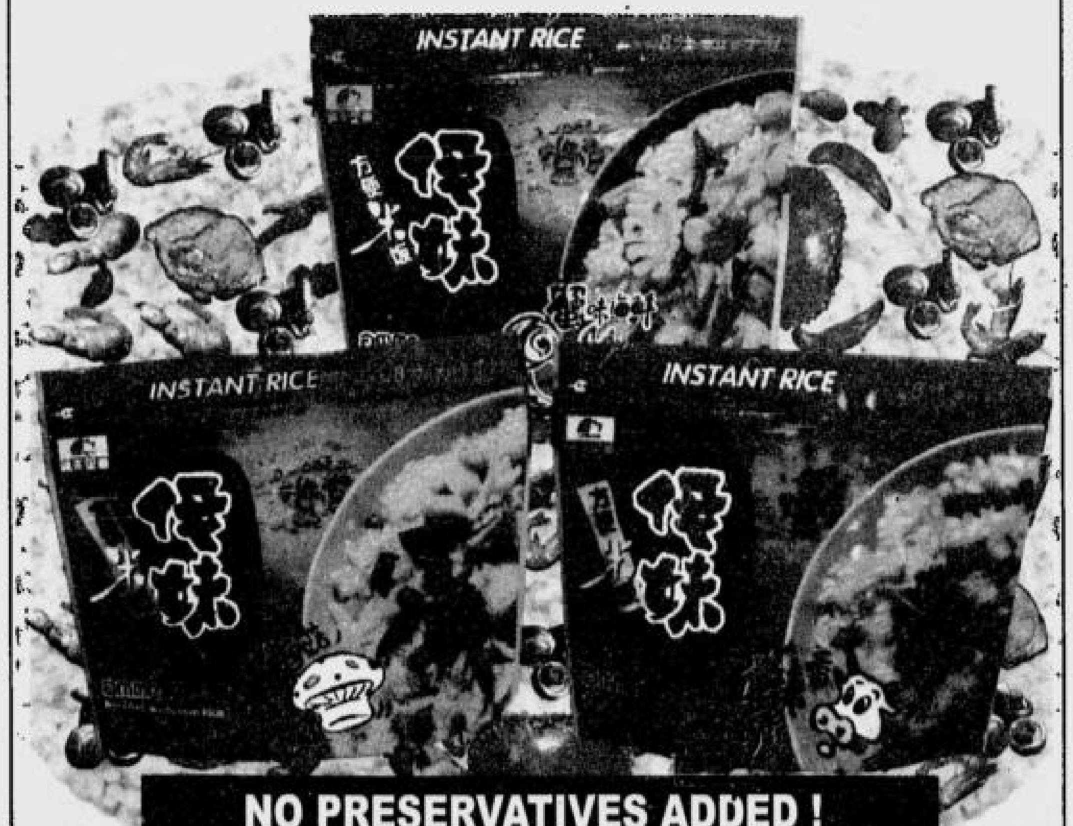

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# Opposition bets cry harassment

TACLOBAN CITY—The opposition Puwersa ng Masa coalition is finding out what it's like to be out of power.

Yesterday, opposition leaders let loose a litany of complaints and accusations against the Macapagal-Arroyo administration, which it accused of harassing the campaign of the opposition senatorial candidates.

Sen. Vicente Sotto III, Puwersa campaign manager, claimed the government was preventing opposition candidates from availing of police escorts during their provincial sorties.

The Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, part of the Puwersa coalition, yesterday expressed alarm over what it said was the active participation of military personnel in "crippling" the opposition candidates' provincial sorties "through covert and overt acts that do not speak well of a neutral, nonpartisan military."

Speaking in Catbalogan, Samar, on Tuesday where the opposition candidates had started a campaign swing through the Eastern Visayas, Sotto claimed that Puwersa's requests for police escorts had been turned down at least twice by provincial police officials. He declined to identify the provinces.

SPO1 Lucino Lopido, officer in charge of the Election Monitoring Action Center in Eastern Visayas, explained that formal requests for police escorts must be sent to Commission on Elections representatives in the areas where the candidates intend to campaign.

Senatorial candidates have to send their request to the Comelec central office, he said.

"If there is no go-signal from the Comelec, they (candidates) cannot be provided with police escorts," he said.

Eight Puwersa senatorial candidates campaigned in Catarman, Northern Samar and the cities of Calbayog (Samar), Tacloban and Ormoc (Leyte) and Maasin (Southern Leyte).

In Tacloban, the LDP claimed that gasoline stations, allegedly under orders from the military, had refused to sell fuel to opposition vehicles, forcing them to source diesel and gasoline from Bicol gas stations.

A private jet intended for the same Eastern Visayan campaign was also allegedly asked to cancel its flight because of the presence of a passenger allegedly not on the manifest.

Makati City Rep. Agapito Aquino, LDP secretary general, said the monitoring of the movements of ousted President Joseph Estrada should not be used as a cover for harassing the private aircraft being used in the opposition campaign.

In Tacloban yesterday, reelectionist Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago made fun of the reported attempt by the administration People Power Coalition to improve its candidates' campaign image and style by making them undergo a one-day seminar.

"Are they horses? Because horses are taught good grooming," she said in Filipino, bursting with laughter as she talked to reporters during a break in the campaign.

"Our program is sex appeal. That cannot be taught in any finishing school," Santiago went on gleefully.

Sotto said he found some of the advice given to the PPC candidates impractical but was evasive when asked if he didn't think some of the Puwersa candidates also needed some pointers on improving their public image. *Joey A. Gavieta, PDI Visayas Bureau, and Dona Pazzibugan*

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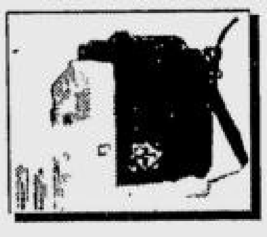

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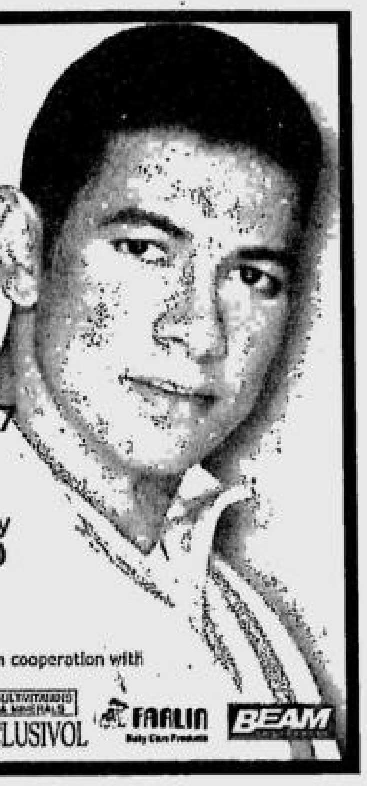

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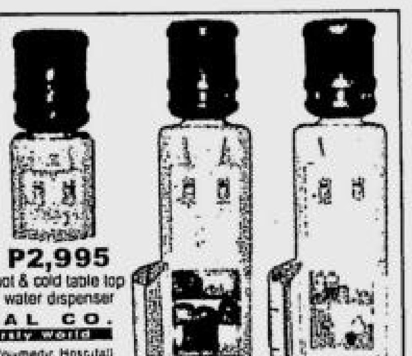

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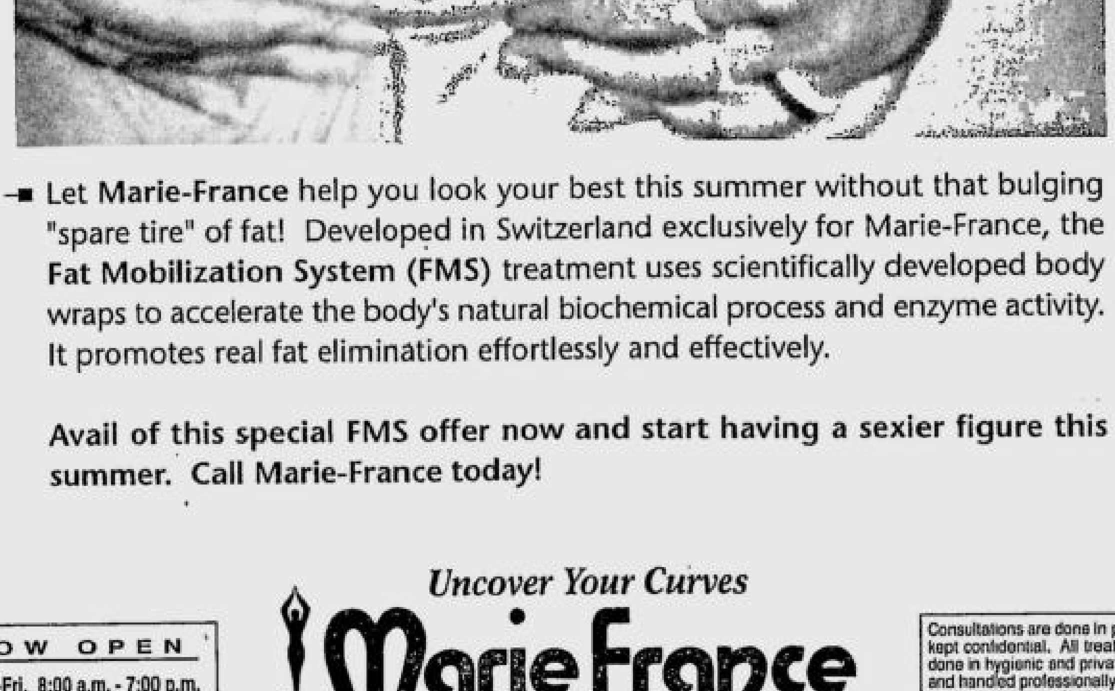

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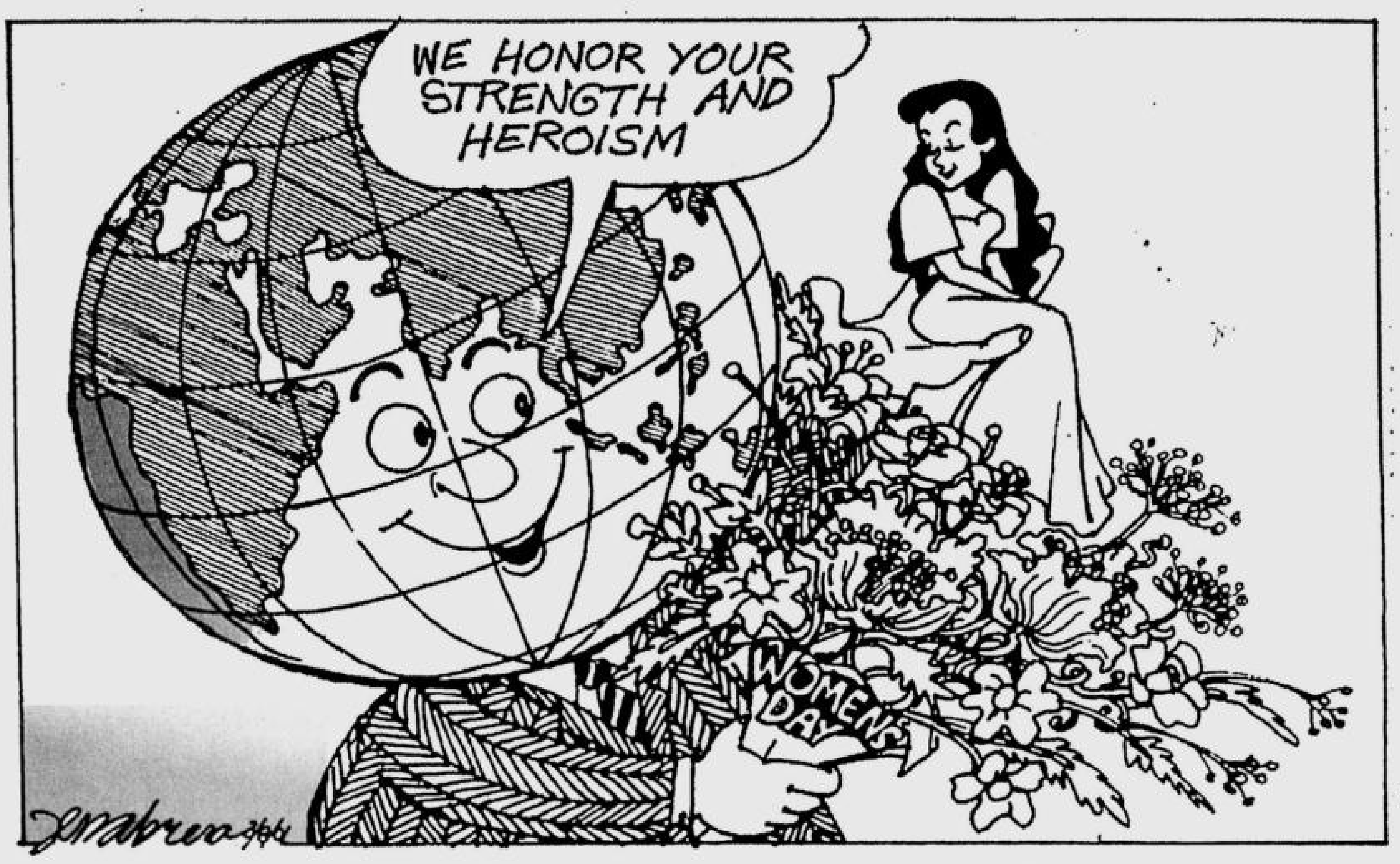
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**EDITORIALS**

# Omerta...

TRANSPARENCY will be a strong suit of the newly named Armed Forces Chief of Staff, Lt. Gen. Diomedio Villanueva, or so he promised. The promise—"I will also see to it that transparency reigns in all transactions," made shortly after President Macapagal announced his appointment—is revealing in that it acknowledges the secrecy that shrouds the military and that has been continually buttressed by the code of silence imposed on its officers and men. Not only revealing but also provocative, coming as it did on the heels of the incumbent Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes' order for outspoken officers to, in so many words, shut their traps. But, at the same time, problematic: Exactly how transparent will this transparency be?

The disclosures of Rear Adm. Guillermo Wong and, lately, Marine Lt. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa, have opened a can of worms as far as the integrity of the AFP is concerned. Suggestions that these disclosures are nothing more than the perorations of a "whiner" or a counterattack against supposed black propaganda hold less weight than the nature of the cases themselves. The cited figures run into millions, even billions, of pesos, and the questioned projects and purchases are specific. Imagine the impact on working stiffs, let alone foot soldiers, long anguished by rumors of retired generals' mansions in Corinthian Gardens or some such enclave.

The impact on the troops of the disclosures of questionable financial transactions in the military has in fact been the top brass' avowed concern. Officers of the Marine Corps angered by Wong's public questioning of the purchase of, among other things, substandard helmets and assault rifles that subsequently vanished, were said to have been incensed by the erosion of their authority in the eyes of their soldiers. It's not a small consideration for the movers of what has always and ever been touted as the AFP's fighting machine.

In gagging not only Wong and Espinosa but also other military officers and men, Reyes apparently meant to take into account the big picture: the image of the AFP and the preservation thereof. He described the disclosure of cases of alleged wrongdoing through the media as "unethical" and "unfortunate." He demanded that complaints be made formally, so that the issues may be settled in the "proper forum."

But the observer attentive to the dangers of omerta particularly where it concerns misuse of government funds cannot be reasonably expected to enthuse at this. To be sure, the injunction against loose lips would be very fine if we were living in, if not ideal, then at least sufficiently civilized, conditions, where redress for grievances comes at a reasonable pace, and, even if slowly, the wheels of justice grind efficiently.

And pardon our short memory, but is it anywhere on record that scams in the military resulted in an investigation that ended satisfactorily (vis-à-vis the public interest, that is)?

# ...And memory

IT is the contention of Lt. Gen. Edgardo Espinosa that there are other, bigger, cases in the military that the authorities should pay attention to. More than the purchase of substandard helmets (in which he was implicated) and the "ghost" firearms, he said, there are the cases involving funds for the recruitment of militia troops, questionable practices in the Logistics Command, and P1.4 billion worth of smuggled goods earlier confiscated by the military.

By any reckoning, these are not small potatoes. These cases have apparently been simmering beneath the surface calm of the AFP waters, the details of which were within Espinosa's reach at the moment that he resolved to do the unthinkable and break the code of silence. Who knows how many other cases are festering there, crying out for disclosure?

Senate President Aquilino Pimentel has weighed in on the turmoil in the military concerning the "feuding" officers' disclosure of alleged scams.

In a press release prepared by his office, he said all this talk, "which has been blown up by the media," could "erode the morale of the fighting troops." He exhorted the officers concerned to desist from talking.

Sudden flicker of memory: Once upon a time in the not so distant past, Pimentel also demanded such a silence, this time from enraged citizens that wanted the Senate impeachment court to know that they expected no less than the conviction of Joseph Estrada.

# LRT I needs a competent administrator

**AS I SEE IT**

*Neal H. Cruz*

BESIDES bombings, strikes and financial losses, the Light Rail Transit Authority is facing more trouble. Executive Secretary Renato de Villa has just appointed an officer in charge of the LRTA, replacing holdover chief Antonio San Luis. (I don't know if President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo knows this.) The sudden appointment of Enrico Garcia, a former department head of the LRTA, as its chief came only a day after a press release came out in a few newspapers saying that employees of the rail line were objecting to the appointment of either the incumbent San Luis, or his predecessor, Moises Tolentino, former chief of the Metro Transit Organization. It was as if the press release and the quick appointment were orchestrated.

Who is Enrico Garcia? The rank and file employees at the LRTA were shocked in disbelief when his appointment was announced. Obviously, they did not have much respect for him as OIC. "If Enrico Garcia can be OIC, we can also apply to Malacañang as LRT chief," some of them said.

The employees don't have much respect either for the two other leading aspirants, San Luis and Tolentino.

San Luis is an appointee of Erap who unabashedly authored and circulated allegedly from employees a petition addressed to President Macapagal for his retention. Tolentino is a former general manager of the privately operated Metro Transit Organization Inc., where his track record is under question.

The LRT came under the management of the MTO during the administration of Tolentino, in effect making him chief of operations of the LRT. Records show that during Tolentino's administration, the LRT lost millions.

According to employees, "mismanagement ran MTO to the ground under the leadership of Tolentino." P3.9 million of the Metro Inc. Employees Credit Corp. (MECCI) were illegally disbursed. MECCI employees filed a complaint of malversation and estafa against Tolentino and his co-conspirators.

In August 2000, the LRTA, after taking over management and operations of the LRT I System, discovered discrepancies in the revenue collections of its former operator, Metro Transit Inc. The discrepancy ran to P200,000 daily or an annual loss of P72 million.

"This is the reason why the LRT is losing money even if it is patronized by thousands and thousands of commuters every day," the employees said.

Obviously, what the LRTA needs now is a competent administrator. There is at present intense jockeying for the top position, both from inside and outside the LRTA. They are using political influence and powerful patrons to get the appointment.

At present, there are five "very strong contenders." Among them are Tolentino and San Luis who are backed by "people very influential to President Macapagal." But LRT employees object to Tolentino and San Luis because of their very bad track records as LRT managers. But, wonder of wonders, the papers of the other three have disappeared from the Presidential Management Staff.

The employees fear that the appointment of Enrico Garcia is just a trick, a Trojan horse placed inside the LRT for some dubious purpose. They fear that Tolentino, who has a very strong supporter in Malacañang, will ultimately be named LRT chief.

They urge President Macapagal to be very careful in choosing the man who will permanently run the LRTA.

It would be a pity if the LRTA becomes just another prize plum for protégés of politicians influential with Malacañang because an efficient rail system is the answer to Metro Manila's traffic mess. There are not enough roads to accommodate the ever growing number of vehicles in the country (600,000 as of last count) with Metro Manila having the greatest number, and the growing commuter-population. Railroad and water transport are the only answers.

Two light rail systems are already in operation (the LRT 1 from Monumento to Baclaran; and the Metro Rail Transit, or Metro Star, along Edsa). A third is under construction, running along Aurora Boulevard, Sta. Mesa Boulevard and Recto Avenue. A fourth, still on the drawing board, will extend the LRT line to Cavite. And, may I add, the Edsa Metro Rail should be extended to Monumento to connect with the LRT I which should, in turn, be extended to Valenzuela and beyond. In addition, the Philippine National Railways should be rehabilitated and ferry services along the Pasig River and around Manila Bay revived to provide commuter transport for the working men.

Compared to a bus which seats only 50 passengers, the first LRT can move 27,000 passengers per hour in one direction between Monumento and Baclaran. The Metro Star, can match the capacity of 5,000 buses.

Great, isn't it? But mismanagement and corruption can derail even the best rail transport system. In fact, it already has and is still derailing the operation of the LRT I.

Indeed, President Macapagal wants to correct this as soon as possible. To do this, she needs the right person to run the LRT toward financial stability and more efficient service for the millions of commuters.

# Don't look now

**WINDMILLS**

*Jerry Barican*

THOSE of us who may have thought that Edsa II constituted the irreversible end of politics, if not of history, in the Philippines must be feeling very self-assured lately. The Supreme Court has spoken, a trite ridiculously (they threw all the rules on hearsay out of the Padre Faura windows) but unanimously. The peso is up. The Vice President is confirmed. Text messaging has subsided. And the People Power Coalition is sailing to a sweeping victory that will put the final seal on history.

How's that last part again? By a coincidence of timing, the May elections are giving the voters nationwide a chance to render judgment on the events of January. In truth, this senatorial election is as much, perhaps more, about people's views on Joseph Estrada than it is about the individual merits of each candidate.

There are several reasons for that. First, and most obviously, the opposition is raising the issue of, as they put it in their rallies, how even a million people in Edsa cannot overthrow the will of the 10 million around the country given in a lawful and democratic election.

It is powerful rhetoric for two reasons. It taps into provincial resentment of "imperial Manila." It stresses the class divide, the sense that "they" (the rich and middle class) are trying to put "us" (the rest of the nation) down for their own benefit.

The personal matter also enters into this. The former first lady is running for senator. The former president is a magnetic draw. The threats to jail him draw sympathy from many. They certainly draw people to his rallies. And he is able to portray every act against him of the Ombudsman, the Department of Justice, or the Bureau of Immigration as yet another act of *pang-aapi*. He is no longer in power and people identify with the underdog.

There are other reasons why this is a referendum, not just an election. The administration itself has named its coalition "People Power" and has even confidently declared a 13-0 shutout as its goal. Consequently, by its own standards, a hypothetical 8-5 outcome in its favor would be perceived as a humiliation; a 6-7 result or worse, if it happened, would constitute a potential political catastrophe and a repudiation of Edsa II.

Although an administration victory in a midterm election like this is usually taken for granted, this election is not the usual state of affairs. The new administration had been barely installed before it was thrust upon this election. The usual sources of money have dried up: many of their allies contributed to the anti-Erap campaign and are in no mood to spend any more now. Even to pragmatic business supporters, a politically weak administration is less threatening than a triumphant one.

The administration's political operatives have had no time to co-opt local political leaders, or if they had, have made some poor choices. There is genuine resentment at the local level by some leaders who have been turned away, whether out of arrogance or principle or both, from the administration coalition. Since there is yet no money, others are indifferent to the appeals of People Power. It is each senator in the coalition to his own.

Finally, the political divide in the country runs deep and the brief time between January and May has not been sufficient for healing. People continue to have strong opinions about Estrada, for and against. Peace with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front may be popular in Manila, for instance, but it is much less so in Mindanao among the Christian communities and they remember the former president's positions vividly.

Under these circumstances, probably the worst thing the administration can do politically is to jail Estrada before the elections. There is no gain on the anti-Estrada side: these voters have nowhere to go but the PPC. But it is likely to generate sympathy votes for the opposition even among those who wanted the then president to resign.

Moreover, jailing Estrada on principle, or as an example, will probably unleash an argument Rene Saguisag has already made: If he is to be jailed, or his family, then fine, but let the principals of previous administrations who have been the subject of scandals sit beside them in the jail cells and try them side by side with equal speed.

Then there is the matter of the accomplices and accessories, too, including those in the business sector. Examples are more convincing, after all, when you make them of your friends, not your enemies. It can become a nasty business whose principal beneficiary will be the Left. "Let justice be done though the heavens fall" may be an admirable principle but you don't win elections when the heavens are falling.

There are other very practical considerations that require the political operatives of the administration to regard this as not just another campaign. An opposition victory, or even a substantial showing, will be interpreted both locally and internationally as heralding a further period of political instability. It will be seen as a referendum the administration lost. The same judges, bureaucrats and politicians who read the wind of January will put their wet fingers up again, with unpredictable and perhaps turbulent results.

Despite all public protestations to the contrary, this administration therefore hopes that Estrada will save them from this potential difficulty by sneaking out of the country. It would destroy him politically while eliminating the dilemmas his continued presence poses. Their public outrage at his surreptitious departure would mask private satisfaction. Unfortunately, it seems that Estrada prefers not to oblige.

Where does all this leave us? Unless things quickly change, we face the prospect of continued political uncertainty, which will translate into more economic uncertainty. The price of example will be high, and it will be extremely naïve for us to believe that only the former president will pay it.

But perhaps we could be wrong. Perhaps the newspaper reports of disarray in the PPC campaign are grossly exaggerated. Perhaps its campaign will catch fire (its candidates have probably noticed the contrast between their current public reception and that given the 1988 Cory Aquino candidates following Edsa I). Perhaps Erap and the opposition have no support left in the country. Perhaps it is going to be 13-0, Erap will go to jail quietly, and we will all live happily ever after. Perhaps. But for the administration, complacency is a poor substitute for thought.

# A great time to be a lawyer

**POLITICAL TIDBITS**

*Belinda Olivares-Cunanan*

BY ALL means, let's have a new registration of young voters, as President Macapagal is pleading with the Commission on Elections. The poll body had turned down the clamor from various organizations to hold a new registration of voters, saying it has no funds for this. But Ms Macapagal says she will make the funds. How about it, Chair Fred Benipayo? It is estimated that about four million youths will be disenfranchised in the May elections if another registration is not held. It behooves the Comelec to hold another registration since it failed to give wide publicity to this effort last December. Besides, the country was caught in a political turmoil at the time.

* * *

**Commissioner Luz Tancangco and her bloc have opposed the holding of a new registration since they seem to be beholden up to now to the past regime. They doubtless realize that majority of the four million youth voters now being locked out of the exercise are veterans of Edsa Dos and so they will be voting against the new opposition. But for many of those youngsters, this is the first time they will exercise their right of suffrage. They deserve to be allowed to vote. I hope Benipayo and the new commissioners will harken the people's clamor for a new registration.**

* * *

The other day in broad daylight, the Tamaraw FX of a family friend was stolen right in front of her house in Sanville Subdivision, Quezon City. But hers was only one of so many vehicles that are being stolen these days. Among the favorites are utility vehicles such as the Tamaraw FX, Revo and Mitsubishi Adventure, as well as vans such as the Mitsubishi L-300 and Toyota Hi-Ace and Lite-Ace.

Why is there a rash of carnapping these days? It's campaign season and politicians reportedly "order" such vehicles from out of town from carnapping syndicates to be used for the campaign. By mid-May, when the elections are over, many of the stolen vehicles will again surface, abandoned in different regions. I understand that "down payments" are accepted by the syndicates for specific out-of-town orders. So make sure your vehicles are properly secured and guarded these days. To the Philippine National Police, please go after these carnapping syndicates.

* * *

**There must be a lot of recrimination and *sisihan* going on in the opposition camp these days over the celebrated Angara diaries, which became the "basis" for the Supreme Court's 13-0 decision declaring President Macapagal as the legitimate chief executive. The justices placed a lot of weight on the published testimony of former Executive Secretary Ed Angara that deposed President Estrada had said, *"Ayoko ko na, pagod na ako."* They read this to mean "effective resignation" on his part. But Angara insists that his boss did not resign, and that the Supreme Court "misinterpreted" the entries in his diaries. But after that unanimous ruling, where will this get him?**

**Estrada's "Little President" evidently wrote the diaries to convey for history his own version of what transpired in the last hours of the Estrada regime, in an effort to correct certain impressions being given by Ms Macapagal's representatives with whom he was negotiating on that fateful day of Jan. 20, 2001. But ironically, instead of saving his neck and that of his boss, those diaries proved to be the final nail on Estrada's political coffin.**

* * *

Last Tuesday, March 6, was the 95th birth anniversary of the much-loved late UP Catholic chaplain, Fr. John P. Delaney, S.J., who died in Baguio City in January 1956. UPSCAns, UPSCA alumni and friends and admirers of Father JPD, led by NVM Gonzales' indefatigable widow, Narita, are holding a get-together to reminisce on him at the Delaney Hall in UP Diliman, tomorrow, March 9, from 5 to 7 p.m. Everyone is cordially invited.

* * *

**Ambassador Ernie Maceda is mad at Rep. Etta Rosales for claiming that he was running as a party-list candidate of the Nationalist People's Coalition, as reported in this column recently. Maceda wrote to say that "as a member of Congress, Rosales should make an effort to know the law." He pointed out that under the law, a person who ran and lost in the previous election is not qualified to run in the party list. (Maceda ran for mayor of Manila in 1998 and lost.) Stressing that he never considered the idea of running for party-list representative under the NPC, Maceda also said he was not a candidate for congressman in Manila's 4th district.**

* * *

Whereas during the Marcos regime many lawyers worked closely with the dictator and his cronies to channel taxpayers' money to private pockets, these days the lawyers are redeeming their once-dishonored profession. Recall the role of the pro bono private prosecutors in the impeachment trial. After the Supreme Court ruling on the legitimacy of the Macapagal presidency, the battle has shifted from the streets to the courtrooms. It's a great time once again to be a lawyer.

As Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. noted in his brief remarks at the dinner tendered in his honor as "Filipino of the Year" by INQUIRER chair Marixi Rufino-Prieto early last month, because of the mass media and the wonders of telecommunication, "the people were exposed to some legal intricacies, if not gobbledygook, and this exposure helped to de-mystify the court process." Davide noted that the performance of the lawyers at the impeachment trial and some of the senator-judges "must have impressed a number of our young countrymen." As a result, he said, applications for enrollment in law schools this year and the next few years "will exponentially rise."

* * *

**An example of the exemplary role of private lawyers these days is the filing with the Ombudsman of a P10-billion forfeiture case against Estrada by some private complainants, who are being represented by a group of lawyers led by impeachment private prosecutor Eduardo "Dindo" de los Angeles. Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo said he plans to deputize De los Angeles' group for the big task ahead of prosecuting Estrada. Under the law, the solicitor general can deputize private lawyers, unlike the Ombudsman who can only deputize other government lawyers.**

**Incidentally, many readers might be confused about the roles of these two government offices in the Estrada cases. What the Office of the Solicitor General handles are cases that are "quasi-criminal" in character, such as forfeiture of property, whereas the Ombudsman handles the criminal cases, such as plunder, before the Sandiganbayan. Under the law, cases involving P50 million and above are automatically classified as "plunder," a heinous crime punishable by death. Once the cases, both criminal and civil, get to the appellate courts, however, the OSG takes over.**

# Celebrating women in politics

**AT LARGE**

*Rina Jimenez-David*

HAPPY Women's Day, sisters! All around the world, International Women's Day is observed today, honoring the women in our lives. As my friend Katrina Legarda is fond of saying, "Whether you are a man or a woman, one thing's for sure: you would not be here if it weren't for a woman, your mother, who bore you for nine months and brought you into this world."

So Happy Women's Day to all mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, daughters, granddaughters, friends and all women who made and are making a difference in other people's lives!

As I write this, I am in Bacolod City, where the women of Bacolod and Negros Occidental are celebrating Women's Month with a flurry of activities. The other day, I was the guest speaker at the "Provincial Forum of Women Political Leaders," a gathering of women candidates for various posts in the elections: councilor, vice mayor, mayor, board member. The affair was sponsored by the Development thru Active Women Networking (DAWN) with Women in Leadership and Legislation for People Empowerment (WillPower), and Abanse! Pinay, the women's party-list group.

I was not surprised that many of the faces in the gathering were familiar, for I had met many of them in the course of trainings and workshops DAWN, Pilipina and Abanse! Pinay has been giving on women and public power. Especially heartening was meeting so many women who were making a stab at politics for the first time after prolonged exposure to these programs. Among these women, whom I dubbed the "political virgins," are June Pavillar Castro, who is running for councilor in Silay City, and Jocelle Batapa, Neda Peraren, Mila Moya, Donna Porter, Marichi Ramos and Celia Ferrer who are running for councilor in Bacolod.

Coming all the way from Sta. Barbara, Iloilo, was Rebecca Maravilla, who is running for mayor in her first political exercise.

* * *

**ALSO a "political virgin" is Andrea Lizares Si, the third nominee of Abanse! Pinay, a Bacolod-based lawyer and woman activist (and mother of seven!). Andrea is not new to politics per se, being president of DAWN Foundation and active in political and women's causes, but this is her first electoral run. Abanse! Pinay emerged No. 1 among the party-list groups in Bacolod and second throughout Negros Occidental. But as I told the women, if they worked hard in 1998, they need to work doubly hard if they wish to see Andrea in Congress. The other Abanse! Pinay nominees are incumbent Rep. Pat Sarenas and Alice Morada, a lawyer and feminist based in Cebu.**

**Two Women's Day activities awaited me the next day. In the morning, I was keynote speaker at the Women's Day celebration of Victorias City. I am some sort of "*suki*" in Victorias, being helpless before the appeals of Mayor Severo Palanca and Councilor Mary Ann Duran Dino, a good friend.**

**Also invited to the Women's Day rites was PPC senatorial candidate Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan. But since Kiko had to join the PPC rally in Bulacan, he sent his younger brother John instead. An architect by training, John proved a more than adequate campaigner, even gamely dancing the cha-cha at the celebration of the Provincial Women's Council later in the day. If Kiko is the mega-lawyer, John said, then he is a "mega-Ilonggo," his wife hailing from Pontevedra. Also a special guest was Rep. Edith Yotoko Villanueva, in whose district Victorias can be found. Representative Villanueva is particularly proud of the Women's Resource Center in Talisay City, which was, by the way, partly funded by Abanse! Pinay through Representative Sarenas.**

**Other city officials I met during the women's day celebration were Councilors Elinore Cabanilla, Dong Galinato, Nitz Bartolome, Vincent Roa and Daniel Tornea.**

* * *

THAT afternoon, we motored back to Bacolod for the Provincial Women's Day Celebration, with the theme "Women as Partners in Peace and Development," and sponsored by the Provincial Council for Women and Abanse! Pinay.

Among the special guests was Cynthia Villar, wife of the former speaker and PPC senatorial candidate Manuel Villar. Ms Villar is herself running for Congress. Though I missed her talk, I was told she spoke of her husband's early years and their struggle to succeed in business and now in politics.

The Negros Occidental Provincial Council for Women is yet another example of how women can get things moving once they unite and agree on a common cause. The concept of a province-wide council for women emerged from a 1994 legislative agenda workshop sponsored by DAWN and the Center for Legislative Development or CLD. The draft ordinance was submitted to the provincial board through then-Board Member Villanueva and was approved after the women's concerted lobbying. From that workshop also emerged LAWN, Legislative Advocates for Women in Negros Occidental. The Negros Occidental PCW is now headed by Ann Marie Depasucat of EB Magalona, wife of Board Member Reynaldo Depasucat.

* * *

**THE POLITICAL situation in Victorias City is interesting. The administration candidate for mayor is Remedios Palanca Bantug, elder sister of the mayor and well known in the city for her philanthropic endeavors and civic involvement. Her strongest opponent is the incumbent vice mayor.**

**In Bacolod, there are six mayoralty candidates, among them the lone woman, Joy Valdez, the incumbent vice mayor. Incredibly, Mayor Oscar Verdeflor is still running for reelection, although he was already declared by the Comelec as an American citizen and has been "absent" from his duties since he suffered a stroke early last year.**

**Lastly, a word for my good friend Celia Flor who is running for a third term as councilor of Bacolod. A founder of DAWN and stalwart of women's organizations and national vice president of Abanse! Pinay, she is an excellent example of a woman who made the blind leap from NGO involvement to politics, successfully bridging the gap between the two worlds, proving that a woman can serve to her utmost abilities in more than one arena.**

# Why him?

**HUMAN FACE**

*Ma. Ceres P. Doyo*

STUNNED and angry are the words to describe the reaction of the friends, poor and rich, of Bienvenido Tan Jr. after they learned of the Sandiganbayan's Fourth Division's decision convicting him of graft and corruption and sentencing him to 15 years behind bars. Because Tan is 77, this was reduced to six years or so. His crime: allowing San Miguel Corp. to pay only P10 million instead of the supposed P302.9-million in 1986.

The former Bureau of Internal Revenue commissioner and ambassador to Germany during the Aquino administration, corporate lawyer and driving force behind social development projects for the marginalized poor is guilty? Tan, by the way, chairs the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Awards Foundation that honors Asian achievers in the field of culture and humanitarian service.

Why this Pinoy Tan, some people ask, and not the infamous Chinese-speaking Tans (no racial slur there) who were in the midnight Cabinet of the ousted former President Estrada? *Sinasampolan ba* to prove that no one is above the law? Why him?

The subtext here is that the case was a compromise deal that immensely favored SMC, so Tan must have gained from this too. Tan is independently wealthy but this couldn't be a mitigating factor, so his best weapon is his integrity. There are people who are known for their wealth but are even more known for their greed.

There is shock and silent outrage over the decision. What can they do to help? people from as far as Cebu are asking. Even former President Cory Aquino called from abroad. Tan is taking it coolly but not sitting down.

I called up Tan the other day to ask what lies in the chasm between the P10 million that the BIR collected from SMC and the P302.9 million that the Sandiganbayan says the BIR should have imposed. This, I said, he has to explain even to those who believe there was nothing in it for him, *kahit singkong bulag*, as my friends in the Payatas garbage dump would say.

Tan has filed a motion for reconsideration. Could they look at the facts a second time? he asks. This case had been brought up before the Senate blue ribbon committee in 1989 during BIR Commissioner Jose Ong's term (after Tan) and Ong had told the committee that the abatement of the deficiency specific tax "is proper," that one cannot impose "a tax on a tax." Ong was referring to the exclusion of the ad valorem tax itself from the tax base for computing the ad valorem tax.

While the case is being reconsidered, Tan hesitates to dwell on the legalities, but he has issued a summary of the SMC case for those who are puzzled. How did it all start? Was it a compromise deal? Or was it a result of a long and thorough study? How was the lowest figure of P10 million agreed upon? Who has the legal authority to decide on tax matters, the BIR experts or the Ombudsman/Sandiganbayan?

Tan shows step by step how the BIR concluded that SMC, which had protested the original BIR assessment of P302.9 million, after all owed the BIR only P21.8 million. How P21.8 million was reduced to P10 million is another story. This was done in "a spirit of goodwill and to avoid protracted litigation which will be costly to both parties." Even this "goodwill" offer from SMC was the "subject of internal study and discussion."

Still in 1993, investigators said there was "manifestly a desperate attempt to justify an illegal scheme" and "that the records are replete with sufficient evidences to show the malfeasance and conspiracy in this case." Charged as partners in the "conspiracy" were Tan and BIR lawyers Juanito Urbi and Jaime Maza, and SMC's Nazario Avendaño and Jaime de la Cruz. Interestingly, not charged was Alice Clemeno, the head of the research, ruling and legislative division, who found "the (original tax assessment for SMC) not warranted and the ad valorem tax assessment unjust and unreasonable" and recommended an assessment of P21.8 million.

Now, how is it, one wonders, that all those who had been originally charged with Tan and whose expertise was the basis for the tax amount approved for SMC were all cleared while "the present accused (is left) to stand alone to answer the charge that was originally filed"?

My gut feel is that something is going to unravel. What is happening to Tan could happen to many like him, while the truly corrupt get off merrily. So who would want to leave one's rewarding career in the private sector and serve honestly in the government? "I've stood for no bribes," Tan stresses. So how could he accept bribes, he asks. The same for giving bribes.

Oh, but there are people who make extortion their career. You, known good guys in government (like BIR's Bañez), should have this pocket-size tape-less recorder that is as small as a marking pen. When someone makes a proposition, switch it on. It has so many playing hours and you can hook it up to your computer to save its contents.

Tan came into the public scene when he volunteered to be public coordinator in the Agrava Commission that investigated the 1983 Aquino assassination. He got a lot of ribbing, like, what was he, a lawyer-businessman, doing there? I did interview him for a feature story at that time and he said something about making time for the country. He was then already involved in projects in the poverty-stricken countryside through the Philippine Business for Social Progress of which he was chair.

I bumped into him again in Germany where he was ambassador and I remember him telling our group about a container van that was discovered in the snow and in it were Filipinos about to suffocate. A year ago, I bumped into him amid the piglets and coconuts in Quezon where he opened a farmers' cooperative center. I know one thing: this guy has bequeathed a sizeable portion of his possessions to the forgotten of this land.

# Clueless aliens

**YOUNGBLOOD**

*N.G. Ayeng*

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.*

WHEN I read the comments of some foreign leaders and journalists about People Power II, I simply pouted, rolled my eyes and said, "As if!" in imitation of Alicia Silverstone in "Clueless." After all, as my brother pointed out, these people didn't know what they were talking about.

But that is precisely what I find galling about their observations. While they are obviously ignorant about our people's struggle, they still speak in a condescending manner that insults all of us who risked our lives to stand up against a corrupt government. The nerve of these clueless aliens to analyze our political experience when they cannot even understand why we flew into a rage the moment those 11 senators prostituted our democratic institutions. The nerve of these clueless aliens to commept on our national character when they couldn't even cry for our murdered countrymen during the Dec. 30 bombings. The nerve of these clueless aliens to belittle our people's triumph when they can catch the first plane out and return to their First World comfort zones the moment the situation turns bloody.

The trouble with these people is that they think every political event can be explained by textbook theories fed to them by their favorite political authors. It's high time they realized that every political struggle is endemic to a culture. It can only be explained in the light of the collective character of a people and the specific circumstances present at the time and place of the event. One cannot be so self-righteous as to volunteer an opinion when one has not immersed oneself long enough with the people to feel their sufferings and know their hopes.

I take offense at three points these foreign commentators have made against People Power II.

First, they say People Power II was nothing more than a triumph of mob rule. Obviously, they did not bother to check what the word "mob" means. Webster says it connotes a chaotic, riotous, unthinking crowd of people. Anybody who was at Edsa and in the rallies held all over the country knows how peaceful and orderly the gatherings were. And to imply that the people of People Power II were an "unthinking crowd" is the height of ignorance. We were at Edsa precisely because we were thinking—about how the 11 senators who voted not to open the envelope made a mockery of the impeachment process; about how it we made a grave mistake in electing the wrong people to run our government; about how our democracy was being prostituted; and about how we could still do something to save our nation and our future from sinking deep into the abyss. It was a peaceful gathering of the Filipino people who, in the exercise of their sovereign power, expressed their collective desire to right everything that had gone wrong. It was not mob rule. It was a democratic exercise of popular sovereignty.

Second, these foreign commentators say that People Power II screwed up the Constitution, our democratic institutions and the principle of due process. Obviously, they did not bother to read our Constitution which allows a president to resign from office at any time during his incumbency. The Filipino people were demanding the resignation of Joseph Estrada. They did not hire the Jackal to assassinate him. The argument that Estrada was a duly elected leader and therefore should have been allowed to finish his term in Malacañang is as stupid as insisting on finishing what is left of the cigarettes in a pack after the doctor has told you that the next stick would kill you.

These foreign commentators say that People Power II did not respect the institutions of democracy. Obviously, they did not bother to find out how the Estrada Resign Movement suffered a setback when the impeachment trial began because many freedom-loving Filipinos decided to give the democratic process a chance to work. It was only when the 11 senators voted to suppress the truth, using legal technicalities to justify it, that the people realized how our institutions had been compromised. Only then did they go full force out into the streets.

These foreigners say People Power II did not follow the principle of due process. Obviously, they did not bother to watch the impeachment trial hour after hour, day after day. Estrada's lawyers insulted the Filipino people when they employed one dirty trick after another. These clueless aliens did not know that in this country, everyone is supposed to go to court "with clean hands." If one goes with dirty hands, due process is violated.

Finally, these foreign commentators say that People Power II was nothing more than a conspiracy among the rich; that it had elitism written all over it; that it was Cory Aquino, Fidel Ramos, Jaime Cardinal Sin and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo who inspired it all. Obviously, they could not understand how middle and lower income groups could come together to shout their indignation over how an administration that kept a big portion of their hard-earned salaries in taxes would spend part of that money to build lavish mansions for the president's mistresses.

The trouble with these clueless aliens is they equate intelligence and the ability to understand with money. It's high time they accepted the reality that in this country, the rich do not have the monopoly of enlightenment. We, the thinking wage earners, have the capacity to think for ourselves, by ourselves. Making People Power II a measure of class is as stupid as saying our economy is doing very well because over a million rich people went to Edsa and only about a thousand poor people went to Mendiola.

These foreigners say People Power II was a product of the political machinations of Cory Aquino et al. Obviously, not one of these clueless aliens was out in the streets on the night of Jan. 16. My brother and I went to Katipunan Road that night thinking we were alone in our rage. Imagine our surprise when we saw students, professionals, nuns and priests and vendors, all spontaneously filling the sidewalks and shouting their indignation against the Estrada administration. We could have been blown to kingdom come that night and Aquino, Sin and Macapagal would not have known about it. Jeez, Ramos was not even in the country when it all started! Nobody called us to join the People Power Revolution, we summoned ourselves.

I submit that it was our lack of vigilance and our failure to take our political exercises seriously that made People Power II necessary. God knows how much I pray that there will be no need for a People Power III. But these foreign commentators do not have the right to take away our people's proud achievement in finally waking up from a deep slumber of apathy to risk our lives in defense of truth, freedom and democracy. They do not have the right to trivialize our courage and character as a people just because they cannot fit the Philippines into their favorite political theories. Perhaps a bloodless revolution is too much of a good thing for them to comprehend and accept as a political reality. If these foreigners cannot understand why we jumped in jubilation when People Power II succeeded in ousting a corrupt president, then they have no business analyzing our struggles. They do not know how real our pain was. They do not know how real our hopes are.

I am writing this to affirm the Filipino spirit that moved us all to courageously stand up for what is true, moral and decent during those oppressive days in January. The wonder of People Power II is ours. And no clueless stranger can ever take that away from us. It was not his future which was at stake during that time but ours and our children's. We owe it to future generations to preserve our story of genuine struggle and triumph so that they can continue to believe in everything that is good in the Filipino. We did the right thing out there. And no matter what these clueless foreigners say, Joe Pesci put it perfectly for us: We will graduate in life with honors. And we will have no regrets.

*N.G. Ayeng, was at Edsa both in 1986 and 2001.*

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# Stories

THERE'S THE RUB

*Conrado de Quiros*

I'M glad several people wrote about the Mendiola march and its contribution to the victory of People Power II. Teddy Casiño had a three-part series on it, which ran from Saturday to Monday. And Philip Tubeza and Lisandro Abadia wrote about it as well last Friday.

I had been asking friends some days before why Satur Ocampo et al. hadn't come out to tell their story about the Mendiola march. Everyone had pretty much crawled out of the woodwork to proclaim his heroism, real or imagined, wrought or planned, I wondered why some of the unassailably true heroes of People Power II hadn't done so. Well, true heroes never like to draw attention to themselves, for the simple reason that they never think that what they did was heroic, they think it was just the right thing to do. Which is why bureaucrats and opportunists always get ahead while the doers and achievers get dumped in the first flush of triumph. The first have all the time in the world to thump their chests, the second have better things to do.

But like I keep saying, this is not just a matter of taking credit, this is a matter of telling the truth about what happened. This is a matter of making people know where they came from and where they are going. It is from stories—and history is nothing more than the stories we tell ourselves about the things that happen to us—that people get to have a sense of accomplishment and purpose. It is from stories—and history is nothing more than today's journalism sinking down in time—that people get a moral claim to lead and govern.

Look at what happened in the first People Power. No one challenged the view that the blood of Ninoy Aquino sparked it, and as a result it became the official, mythical, version of the Creation. As a result, the blood that was spilled before Aquino, by the activists, by the revolutionaries, by the ordinary citizens whose crime it was to raise a fist at tyranny, disappeared. They did not matter. They were pre-history, they were pre-In-The-Beginning.

I am glad Casiño et al. have done something about this, before the versions of Angara, and the generals, and Jaime Cardinal Sin, Cory Aquino and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo became writ in tablet. I do know that the Mendiola march was the one final push that shoved Erap out of Malacañang. Some friends of mine who worked with the Erap administration till the end told me so. Despite the defections of his generals and trusted aides, Erap was determined to stay on and see if he could turn the tide with time. He gave up completely when he heard the clamorous horde storming down the gates of Malacañang. He would call it a mob, but mobs have never been known to drive presidents out of their homes, official or personal. A people's fury has. Erap heard the tolling of the bells, and fled.

Abadia himself, whose love for the Left can never be enviable, would vouch for this pass. Without that march, he says, things might have turned out differently for People Power II. Erap's downfall might have been written on the wall, but it might have taken longer, or been more violent. We know now, from Abadia's and Tubeza's and Casiño's stories, that it was Sin, and later Cory and Macapagal who first approved of it but later backtracked to side with Sin, who vigorously opposed the march and sowed the first seeds of dissension within the ranks. Why he did so, we may only speculate. The charitable view is that he was concerned about the violence that might erupt from a confrontation between the marchers and Erap's loyalists. The uncharitable view is that he did not want attention wrenched away from Edsa not because it was God's holy ground but because it was his home turf.

I suspect it was a little of both. There was reason for anxiety at the time, and I myself worried that the confrontation between the marchers and Erap's loyalists might prove to be an irresistible force meeting an immovable object. My daughter had been covering Ayala earlier Friday for ANC, and there a group of goons armed with ice picks had hurled rocks and insults at an anti-Erap group. I pictured a more unsavory version of it in Mendiola.

But there is reason too to suppose Sin's reluctance to see some of the crowd leave Edsa for Mendiola did not owe entirely to this. A few days before, during the first day of Edsa (Wednesday morning), I had just been telling an audience at Mary Hill that signs and symbols carried a weight of meaning that often proved decisive in interpreting history. I expressly gave the example of Edsa and Mendiola, saying Edsa resonated with images of Sin and Cory while Mendiola resonated with images of activists and street parliamentarians. That was one reason, I thought, why Sin had called for people to mass at Edsa the night before, despite the fact that noise barrages had sprouted spontaneously in various parts of Metro Manila—as indeed other parts of the country—and despite the fact that unlike the anti-Marcos protests, the anti-Erap protests had been largely decentralized. Edsa was synonymous with Sin and Cory, other places were not.

My own monumental mistake has been to keep using "Edsa II" subsequently, which tends to deepen the version of history that says People Power II originated from and ended in Edsa. It did not. If it originated and ended in any place at all, it did so from and in Mendiola. It was in Mendiola, as in the past when the First Quarter Storm blew furiously into these shores, that the second People Power was born, from the rallies of groups as much opposed to one another as to Erap. And it was in Mendiola, as in the past when Chino Roces locked arms with the *anak-pawis*, that the second People Power ended, with the politically disparate groups finding common cause with one another.

Henceforth, I won't call it Edsa II, I'll call it Mendiola II.

I'm glad Casiño et al. have offered the view from below. It not only puts you in the thick of things, where you see the banners fluttering in the breeze, where you hear the cries of the shoeless and shirtless echoing on the pavement of Claro M. Recto, where you smell the sweat, and the smog and the heaving of the earth. It gives you the best vantage point for seeing what People Power II was all about.

Of course ,there are some hazy, or even blind, spots there to mar the view. Nowhere in Casiño's enumeration of the groups that made People Power II possible do other groups like Akbayan appear. Surely they helped mightily in making that revolution, too? Well, it does say that the journey from—or to?—Mendiola isn't over, it has only begun.

But that, quite literally, is another story.

* * *

*Comments are welcome at dequiros@vasia.com*

# The phenomenal women of the FQS

PINOY KASI

*Michael L. Tan*

FEW women have survived as many trials as Raquel (Rock) Edralin Tiglao did during her 53 years: detention as a political prisoner and bouts with a brain tumor, breast cancer and finally, lung cancer. Yet these adverse events seem almost like interludes, happening incidentally between all her other achievements.

Rock helped establish and nurture several NGOs, including Parents' Alternative Inc., a day-care center for children of political prisoners; the feminist group Kalayaan; and the Women's Crisis Center (WCC), which offers counseling and shelter for battered women. Even in her final battle with cancer, Rock continued to work with the WCC and helped to form still another organization, the Reproductive Rights Resource Group.

Rock was one of the phenomenal women of the First Quarter Storm (FQS) of 1970. People tend to associate the FQS with anti-Marcos rallies and demonstrations but there was much more to that turbulent era. The FQS marked a turning point in Philippine history and the emergence of a new political consciousness. While its slogans reverberated with the three "anti's"—anti-imperialism, anti-feudalism, anti-bureaucrat capitalism—the national democratic ("nat-dem") movement was the nucleus for a number of social and cultural changes, including women's rights and feminism.

The movement attracted many women; in fact, I suspect there were many more female activists than males. There was even a nat-dem women's organization, Makibaka, established by people like Nelia Sancho and Maita Gomez, who had won titles in beauty contests but returned to picket the pageants which they condemned as examples of women's commodification.

Martial law drove Makibaka and the nat-dem organizations underground. The FQS women fanned out into schools, factories and rural villages to organize against the Marcos dictatorship. Rock was one of those FQS women. She was arrested and detained for a year.

Many of the FQS women were arrested, tortured and executed. One of the most brutal cases involved Liliosa Hilao, a 23-year-old student organizer who was arrested in 1973 and who died during interrogation, after muriatic acid acid was poured down her throat.

Other FQS women took to the hills. Maria Lorena Barros was the most well-known among them. She was killed in an encounter with the military in 1976, at the age of 28.

Through the Marcos years, there were other women activists who were killed or who "disappeared" (picked up by the military and never found again): Leticia Ladlad, Cristina Catalla, Rizalina Ilagan, Puri Pedro, Soledad Salvador, Filomena Asuncion, Resteta Fernandez.

Whenever a woman activist was arrested or killed, the media would describe them as "amazons," after the women warriors of Greek mythology. The term was used pejoratively, suggesting that these women, by daring to fight for their principles, were against nature.

Unnatural, no; phenomenal, yes. These were women who danced and wrote poetry; and loved their men (and for some, women) with the intense passion they gave to their political activism. They were, as one of Rock's friends described her, "effortlessly beautiful." At Rock's wake, standing in front of her closed casket, I suddenly recalled Maya Angelou's poem, "Phenomenal Woman," which could very well describe so many of the FQS women. Here's an excerpt: *"I say/It's the fire in my eyes/And the flash of my teeth/The swing of my waist/And the joy in my feet./I'm a woman/Phenomenally/Phenomenal woman./That's me."*

These phenomenal women touched the lives of everyone around them, radicalizing their convent school alma maters (for example, St. Scholastica's and St. Theresa's) and organizing their *ates* and *nanays* and *titas* and *lolas* for the movement. We had them, too, these "late blooming" *titas* and *lolas*, in the health sector; in particular, I remember Minda Luz Quesada, a nurse and UP professor who became one of the most fiery and effective organizers of health workers.

Then there was Adul de Leon, one of the finest Filipina actresses. Drawn to radical politics a bit late in life, she eventually headed the women's organization Gabriela. She was actually the one who first got me involved in HIV/AIDS work way back in 1985. Without funding support, Adul organized health education programs for the sexually prostituted in Manila, Olongapo, Angeles and Pagsanjan.

Not all the FQS women remained in the nat-dem movement. Some grew weary of the men cajoling them to uphold class struggle first and to wait till the revolution was over for women's rights. It didn't help when the nat-dem movement had its splits in the 1990s. But then the FQS spirit is something that transcends ideologies—certainly it remained with many of the women and their organizations, whether nat-dem or not, passed on to new generations of activists.

Ironically, some of the FQS women who survived martial law were to succumb, in midlife, to cancer: Minda Luz, Adul, Estrella Consolacion (another founder of Kalayaan), Rosa Meneses (of the Philippine Breast Cancer Network) and now Rock. But I can't say these deaths were premature. Whether they died in the hills in their 20s, or in a hospital bed in their 50s, these phenomenally phenomenal Filipinas led full and colorful lives that overflowed with caring and courage.

In Latin America, activists often hold memorial services where they read out the names of comrades who have died. As each name is called out, people respond in unison, "*Presente*!" Rock and her sisters may have moved on, but they remain with us, their fiery and intense spirit as alive in the clenched fists raised during street rallies as in the hand stretched out, offering solace and strength to battered women in halfway shelters.

* * *

*Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.org*

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LETTERS

# What's in store for the youth under GMA?

THOSE who marched with the people at Edsa and Mendiola to demand the immediate ouster of a corrupt president continue to seek great reforms in the new leadership. We saw it as very urgent that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo immediately undo everything that Estrada committed against the interests of the youth and the people to restore our faith in the national government. We assumed that she would never forget the promises of People Power II and the fact that she was installed in power by a people's movement demanding relief from poverty and redress for injustice.

We presented to President Macapagal the agenda of the youth last January with optimism. We were happy that she was willing to dialogue with the youth and hear our demands. Almost all of us never stopped counting on the possibility that the education sector will be finally given the highest allocation in the national budget as the Constitution mandates. We began to consider the prospect of getting our education without the dreaded tuition increases every year. We looked forward to the opening of all closed campus publications, student councils and the cessation of harassment of student leaders in their advocacy of the democratic rights of the students. We started to plan how we would welcome again the young political prisoners wrongfully accused or persecuted in the past administrations for their political beliefs. And most of all, we imagined ourselves boasting to our children and grandchildren in the future how we jailed and prosecuted Estrada, once the most powerful man in the country and his cronies for their acts of treachery against the Filipino people.

Weeks have passed and the youth continue to wait for substantial responses to their interests from the national government. We believe it should really not take the President a long time to prove her sincerity in following the ideals of Edsa and Mendiola. If she can speedily pledge tax incentives and additional funds for the modernization program of the military, why can't she do the same for education? She has consistently commended the military for its "crucial role" in Edsa, yet she hardly talks about the urgent people's issues that demand immediate action.

We were told by our elders that days after Edsa I, then President Cory Aquino ordered the unconditional release of all political prisoners. President Macapagal has refused to take a similar action.

Consultations in private schools on tuition increases are almost over but we never heard the President say her administration would pursue measures to control exorbitant school fees.

We are sad to see the promises of People Power II being slowly betrayed by the government in the same manner that the promises of People Power I were ignored by the Aquino administration. We, the youth, did not embark on an arduous task just to replace one president with another of the same mold. We are slowly beginning to realize that President Macapagal may just be a disappointment to the youth and perhaps no different from Estrada whom we despised so much. As the generation that witnessed the removal of a poor excuse for a president and the bearers of the lessons of the unfinished People Power, we resolve to continue our task of seeking justice and meaningful change in our country. We will remain vigilant so that the next generations will not blame us for giving them a society where tyrants and corrupt men rule.—**RAYMOND PALATINO, chair, UP Diliman Student Council, and vice president, National Union of Students of the Philippines, 13 San Vicente SFDM, Quezon City 1105**

## Filipino nurses have earned respectability

IT was with great interest that I read Bambi Harper's article on forgotten Filipinos, especially the focus on the early Filipino nurses. Being a nurse for the past 20 years and proud to be one, I felt good that the pioneers of Philippine nursing are at last remembered. However, as I read further down, I wondered about the author's own personal regard for the nursing profession and if indeed she was paying tribute to forgotten Filipinos. To quote: "Doesn't it make you wonder what the direction of this country would have (taken) had the scholarships (given to nurses in the early 1900s) been for science and technology?" "If you are wondering why we chose an obscure subject to research on, blame it on the prominent media faces of former President Estrada's bosom buddies...seeking accommodation with the Macapagal administration."

In the early 1900s, health conditions in the Philippines were of utmost concern to the Department of Health. It had to contend with a high incidence of *beri-beri* among infants, endemic diseases among adults and on top of these, public health concerns. There was a scarcity of health personnel for the much needed patient care and public health education. It was therefore critical and timely that scholarships were awarded to nurses. The direction of this action was toward saving Filipino lives.

I am one of those who do not find forgotten Filipinos and nursing obscure subjects nor believe that we have to thank unsavory characters for these important subjects to be brought to the people's attention. Nursing has earned respectability among the health professions. Advanced degrees in nursing include masters and doctoral levels and practitioners in areas of medicine such as anesthesia, primary care and research. Nursing is a science.

Filipino nurses have excelled in their careers in the Philippines and in foreign countries where they have been given the opportunity to work. In the United States, one will find Filipino nurses in top administrative levels, middle management positions, deanships or faculty positions, and advanced nursing practice as nurse practitioners or nurse anesthetists. The majority of nurses are in direct patient care and they are highly regarded by their patients due to their excellent care. In Saudi Arabia, Filipino nurses are now in entry level managerial positions.

The present achievements of Filipino nurses in whatever part of the world they may be are a culmination of the early efforts of the pioneers of nursing in the Philippines and Filipino nurses will continue to make their mark in global nursing.

Among health professionals, Filipino nurses continue to have an impact on global health care delivery systems. As a significant part of the overseas labor force, they contribute significantly to the Philippine economy, specifically in helping stabilize the dollar reserves of the country during times of economic crisis. During critical times like the present, when the economy is trying to regain a stable footing and when sentiments about the moral fiber of the Filipino is raw, it is irresponsible for journalists to ascribe obscurity and pay scant attention to the contributions of this group of Filipino professionals who richly deserve respect. May I suggest good judgment and good homework.—**LILY P. ORTICIO, RN, MSN, MBA, nurse manager/administrative supervisor, Bascom Palmer Eye Institute/Anne Bates Leach Eye Hospital, University of Miami School of Medicine, Miami, Florida, USA**

## Looking at the bigger picture

I FIND it tragically sad that we, as a people, seem to be eternally unable to see the bigger truth about any issue, preferring instead to concentrate on the tiny but seemingly logical picture.'

Take, for instance, the current debate on the legitimacy of the assumption of Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to the Philippine presidency. According to Joseph Estrada, Ms Macapagal cannot be considered as the president because the presidency was not vacant when she took her oath of office on Jan. 20, 2001, notwithstanding the fact that the oath was administered by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. The main reason advanced is that, according to the Philippine Constitution, the vice president can only assume the presidency when any of the following conditions exists: one, the incumbent president dies; two, he is incapacitated and unable to govern; and three, he resigns from office. They say that none of these conditions existed at the time Ms Macapagal took the oath of office.

When we first heard those arguments from the Estrada camp, led by his brilliant lawyer, Rene Saguisag, they seemed to be logical and persuasive. They adhere to the rule of law; since we live in a democracy committed to the rule of law, everybody is bound to follow or obey it.

Well and good. Any thinking Filipino, even those who have not set foot in Harvard, Oxford, or Cambridge, or passed a UP College entrance examination, according to soon-to-be ex-Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, will agree.

The problem is that I see something spurious about the whole argument of the Estrada lawyers which has not been too well ventilated. They forget that one cannot argue against a bigger factual reality, that the letter of the law must give way to the spirit behind the law. One cannot argue that President Ferdinand Marcos was still alive because he declared in public that, "I don't intend to die." In the same manner, we cannot say that Estrada is still president because he has repeatedly declared, "I will not resign." Even up to now when he is out of Malacañang and has no more authority to govern whatsoever, he still insists, "I have never resigned."

This may well be logically true, and his lawyers, who crafted his farewell letter carefully avoiding that word, are insisting he is merely on leave. They argue their case based on legal technicalities and gobbledygook, but they cannot argue against the bigger factual reality that he is already out of office and cannot and will not be allowed to govern by the people.

The other seemingly logical but spurious argument presented by Saguisag is that the sentiments of one million or even two million who rallied against Estrada cannot overrule the 10 million people who voted for him, otherwise, what we will have is the tyranny of the minority. But who can say that the 10 million who voted for Estrada still felt the same way? If they still did, then 10 million should have rallied and marched to Malacañang to support him, if we were to logically pursue Saguisag's argument. But where were they? Weren't some of them at Edsa, too?

Saguisag's argument reminds me of a cartoon that I saw in a book on how to think correctly. Two men were on top of a tree because a bear was pursuing them. One of the men was reading a book and told his companion, "Don't be afraid, this guide book says that bears do not climb trees." As he is busy reading the book, the other man was shown looking at the bear climbing up the tree and dangerously closing in on them.

Translation: Don't worry, Mr. Estrada. You are still the president, because this book, the Philippine Constitution, says the vice president can only assume office if you have resigned, are incapacitated or have died. You are not yet dead, you are not incapacitated and you have not resigned. Therefore you are still the legitimate president of the country and Ms Macapagal is merely acting president.

This line of argument again reminds me of that unforgettable, legendary King Canute who thought that since he was the king and could make any law, which everybody should obey, he could outlaw tidal waves and prevent them from entering his kingdom.

But as I pointed out earlier, one cannot argue against facts no matter how logical or legal the argument appears to be.

During the Third Reich in Germany, Adolf Hitler ordered every Jew exterminated. Because that was the law, his subordinates followed it, killing six million Jews in the process. They never bothered to see the bigger picture. I see the same parallelism here.—**JAIME T. LICAUCO, Rm. 308 Prince Plaza I, 106 Legaspi St., Greenbelt, Makati City**

## NEWSBRIEFS

### P100-M offer to Serge

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said Sen. Sergio Osmeña III was offered P100 million to run under the opposition party. Osmeña turned down the offer, she said. The President disclosed this during a rally in Bulacan where she and Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. campaigned for the People Power Coalition candidates. Her statement, which could not be immediately confirmed with Osmeña himself, jived with Rep. Ernesto Herrera's claim that ousted President Joseph Estrada is bankrolling the senatorial campaign of the LDP-Puwersa ng Masa from the Jose Velarde billions. Herrera said Estrada would spend whatever it takes to make his wife, former first lady Luisa Estrada, win.

"There's no limit as long as Loi will win," Herrera said. Herrera, a PPC candidate said, "Loi is like Erap running. As far as Erap is concerned, Loi's candidacy is his referendum. If Loi loses it's because of him," Herrera said. Herrera said Estrada could have spirited away some of his multibillion-peso account.

Reacting from Tacloban City where she was campaigning, the former first lady denied Herrera's claim. "There's no truth to that. I don't know where they got that story," she said.

### No new listing

THE COMMISSION on Elections, for the nth time, yesterday closed its doors on the holding of special registration for some four million new voters who failed to register for the May 14 elections. The announcement came as youth groups banged the gates of the poll body's office protesting the disenfranchisement of young voters.

Comelec Commissioner Rex Borra said there is no legal basis to hold a special registration for the May 14 elections since Republic Act 8189 prohibits the holding of registration 120 days before a regular election and 90 days before a special election. "As far as we are concerned, the issue is closed," he said.

Comelec chair Alfredo Benipayo said the Comelec would have to move the date of the elections if a special registration was to be held.

### Who needs new plane?

EVEN if she doesn't want it, President Macapagal-Arroyo needs to buy a new presidential plane to ensure her safety while flying. Air Force chief Lt. Gen. Benjamin Defensor said he would strongly recommend that Ms Macapagal replace the old presidential plane, a Fokker 28, with a new one that could cost the government some P40 million. "We're recommending that she should have a better aircraft because... she is the commander in chief, so she should have the safest, most comfortable and efficient aircraft within the means of the government," he said in an interview. She had earlier rejected calls for the purchase of a new presidential aircraft, saying she preferred spending the money on jet fighters.

### Jessica: No foul play

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation yesterday ruled out foul play in the mysterious death of 2nd Lt. Jessica Chavez, belying her father's claim that she was murdered inside Fort Bonifacio in Makati. "I know that this (finding) will hurt the victim's father," said NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco. "But this is the result of our investigation." Wycoco said the single gunshot wound at the victim's chest was "self-inflicted."

"We are very definite that based on scientific findings it was a self-inflicted wound. But whether it was accidental or suicide remains to be determined," he stressed. The finding supports the conclusion of the Southern Police District that Jessica was not a victim of foul play.

But Jessica's father, Efren, is convinced that his daughter was killed in cold blood. He had asked the NBI and the PNP Criminal Investigation and Detection Group to uncover the motive for the alleged killing as well the brains behind it.

The 22-year-old graduate of the Philippine Military Academy was found dead inside her barracks at the Philippine Army military police headquarters in Fort Bonifacio on Feb. 9. She was a member of the Sanghaya Class 2000.

### Lee's swipe 'not official'

SINGAPORE—When elder statesman, Lee Kuan Yew, took a swipe at democracy in the Philippines during a recent interview, it was his personal opinion, not the official government line, lawmakers here were told Wednesday. "The senior minister, in an interview with the Associated Press on Jan. 22, expressed his personal opinion that it would have been better for the Philippines had President Joseph Estrada been removed in a constitutional way by conviction in the Senate," a parliamentary secretary said on behalf of Lee. The answer came in response to opposition politician Joshua "J.B." Jeyaretnam, who wanted Lee to defend his comment.

Lee has often said Western-style democracy is not for everyone and Singapore would not be the wealthy, peaceful nation it is if he had followed the Western model of governing. *AP*

### Japanese bullish, but...

JAPANESE businessmen yesterday expressed confidence in the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo but urged her to immediately address concerns on the instability of government policies, the lack of incentives and threats to personal security. Japan External Trade Organization (Jetro) chair Noboru Hatakeyama said their 67-member investment mission currently in the country was proof that Japanese businessmen welcomed the change in government.

Hatakeyama, who heads the mission, said Japanese businessmen had been avoiding the Philippines the past few years because of the political instability in the country. The mission will wrap up its five-day visit to the Philippines tomorrow.

With a more credible President at the helm, Hatakeyama said, the Philippines has restored foreign investor confidence in its economy.

### Airport blowout

AN ASIAN Spirit plane blew out three of its tires on landing at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport yesterday, delaying several international flights for about an hour as it sat on the tarmac. The newly acquired CN-235 aircraft had just returned from a test flight over Clark Air Base in Pampanga when the tires burst on touching down on Naia runway 6 at around 1:50 p.m.

"Apparently, the brakes locked upon landing and the wheels dug deep into the asphalt runway, causing the blow-outs," an Air Transportation Office staffer said, quoting the pilots of the plane. Capt. Gomer Monreal and Captain Sumarwoto, both of Indonesia, had been test-flying the aircraft accompanied by two flight engineers and an ATO staffer. No one was hurt in the incident.

# Wong on gag order: Public must know

By Carlito Pablo

REAR Admiral Guillermo Wong does not agree with his superior, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes, on the wisdom of preventing the AFP's officers and men from speaking out on military corruption.

"If the issues involve large-scale corruption or if taxpayers' money is involved, then the public must know," said Wong who had earlier blown the lid on corruption in the Marine Corps.

Wong, who was forced to step down as Navy chief because the Marines demanded it, was commenting on an order issued by Reyes prohibiting officers and men from speaking to media in cases involving graft and corruption and other misconduct in the service.

Reyes issued the AFP-wide order following recent disclosures of financial irregularities in the military.

In Reyes' book, the practice of officers going public about corruption inside the AFP is "unethical."

Wong said he would agree that administrative issues within the AFP should be kept internal, describing them as "things that should be resolved quietly."

"There must be exceptions to the gag order," Wong said.

Wong has reportedly been offered an ambassadorial posting in a Southeast Asian country by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"The President told me the government should show the people that good officers must be treated well," Wong said, indicating he intends to accept a diplomatic posting.

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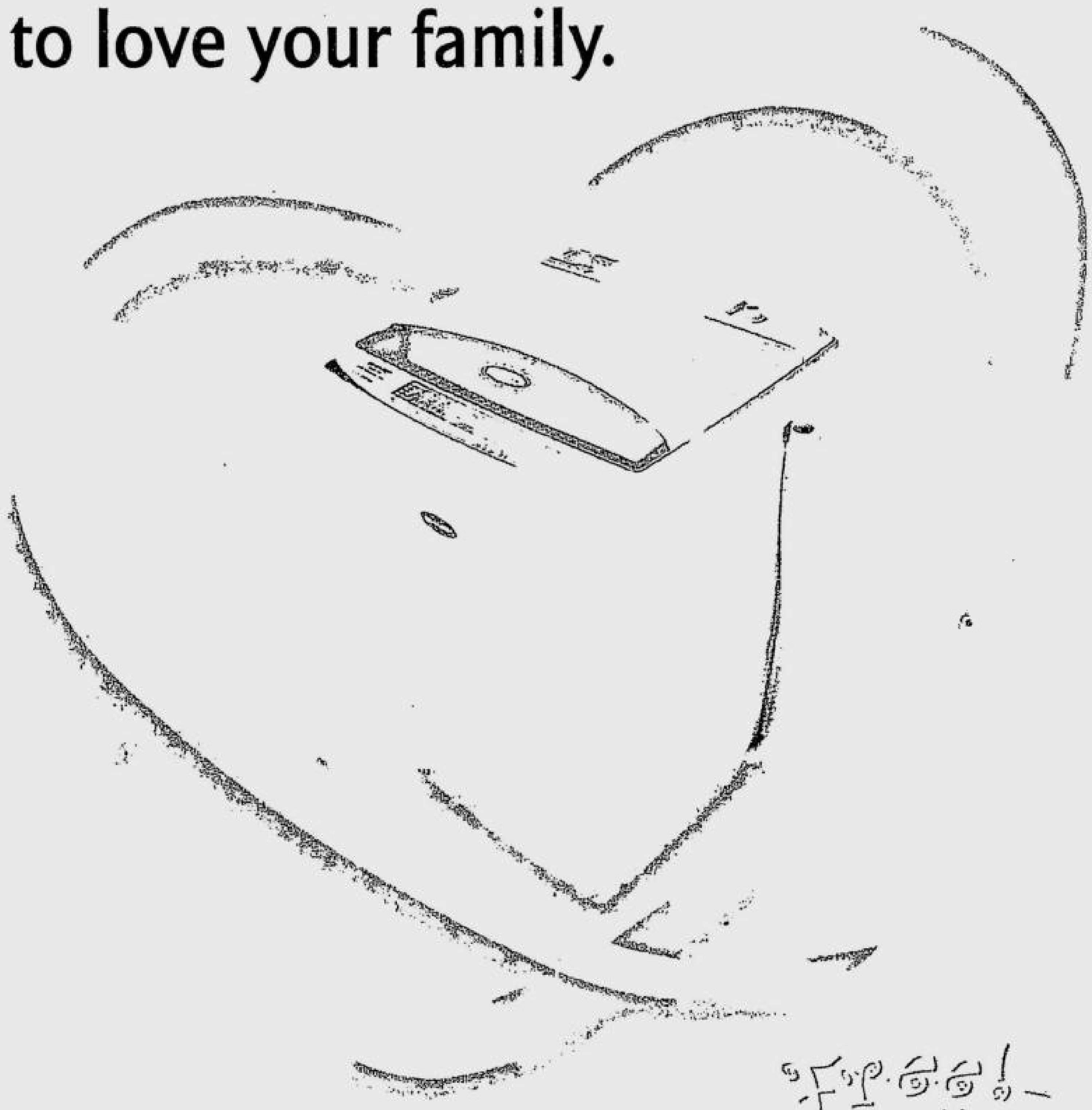

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# 60 dead in China school blast

**BEIJING—A huge explosion ripped through a school in east China where pupils as young as eight were forced to make fireworks, killing up to 60 people including many children, witnesses said yesterday.**

The blast at around 11 a.m. (same time in Manila) Tuesday flattened the two-story school building in the village of Fanglin in Jiangxi province where an illegal fireworks factory had been set up three years ago, said the sources.

Villagers using spades and their bare hands desperately tried to rescue children and teachers from the rubble of the school in Wazai county, many of whom suffered horrific burns.

"I helped them dig out 30 to 40 bodies. They were all dead, not one was alive. They suffered terribly. Some of the bodies had their heads blown off," said Ding Haigen, a builder who lives opposite the school.

The official Xinhua news agency said 41 people died and 27 were injured in the explosion, but Ding put the death toll at over 60.

A doctor at Tanbu township hospital in Wazai county who arrived at the scene within minutes said a class of third grade pupils, aged between eight and nine, had been putting fuses into firecrackers at the time of the blast.

"The third grade pupils were working on firecrackers in their classroom on the first floor. In the third grade classroom there were 45 pupils, and only two or three are still alive," said the doctor, asking to remain anonymous.

An official at Tanbu hospital declined to give an exact death toll, but he said six adults also died—five teachers and an elderly man.

Villager Ding said the fireworks enterprise was set up by the headteacher with the help of the village's Communist Party secretary, adding that Jiangxi is a major fireworks producing region.

"They began forcing students to do this two to three years ago. Teachers gave responsibility to the kids to make firecrackers during their lunch hour. The school wanted to make money," said Ding.

"They didn't pay the kids anything. The parents complained many times to the school and the township government, but nothing happened."

Another villager said the elementary school with 400 pupils would produce as many as 1,600 firecrackers in a week. A third resident said the school principal had fled after the blast.

A spokesperson for the local police in Tanbu township, an impoverished rural region some 400 km northeast of Hong Kong, flatly denied the blast was caused by firecrackers.

But an official at the Tanbu local government said the authorities had received complaints that the school was being used to assemble firecrackers.

"After the accident, some pupils' parents came to report about the firecracker producing activities but the police could not find any clue at the scene," said the official.

Xinhua news agency said fire crews and police from Yichun city, 30 km to the south, rushed to the scene and worked through the night to pull the injured from the rubble.

Villagers said crowds of distraught parents and officials gathered around the school as the rescue continued, while the local government later dispatched an earth-removing machine to help clear the bodies.

Jiangxi provincial governor Shu Shengyou, who was attending the annual meeting of China's parliament in Beijing was returning home to take charge of the rescue and investigation, said Xinhua.

Starved of central government cash, many schools in China's impoverished rural regions are desperate to find other funding to keep schools open.

Besides assembling toys and producing small handicrafts, students in rural China have even been known to work in mines and other labor intensive activity.

Even in prosperous cities like Beijing and Guangzhou schools are renting out space, running restaurants and engaging in sales of small sundry items to parents and students. *AFP*

# Mori denies he'll resign soon

TOKYO—Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori yesterday acknowledged that his increasingly shaky administration has "major problems" to deal with, but denied reports he intends to announce his resignation early.next week.

Defending himself in Parliament amid several reports he will soon step down over scandals and repeated gaffes, Mori said he intends to stay in office to see the final passage of this year's budget, which is expected later this month.

"We have major problems that must be dealt with, so I must show my leadership to get us through this session of Parliament," Mori said. "I must work to restore the public's trust while carrying out reforms within the party."

### Pressure up

But pressure on Mori to resign from within his own ruling Liberal Democratic Party appeared to be increasing.

The mass-circulation Asahi reported that Mori has told party leaders he will formally announce his resignation early next week and leave office next month after the 2001 budget clears Parliament's upper house. It was passed by the lower house earlier this week.

The daily quoted a party official as saying Mori would make the announcement next Monday or Tuesday, when the party holds its annual convention. The Yomiuri newspaper, the country's largest, and Kyodo News had similar reports.

Mori denied the reports. "I have no such intention now," he said. "I try not to look at the newspapers these days."

Still, it was unclear whether he would be able to stave off the resignation calls much longer.

Mori assumed office April after Keizo Obuchi suffered a fatal stroke. His tenure has been marred by scandals and gaffes, and his public support ratings have fallen to below 10 percent.

### Scandals

His party is now mired in a scandal involving bribery allegations against several of its members, and Mori himself is under fire for continuing a game of golf after hearing a US submarine had collided with a Japanese high school's fishing boat off Hawaii on Feb. 9.

Officials in Mori's party and its two ruling coalition partners have expressed concern that his lack of support could hurt them in elections for the upper house of Parliament in July.

Earlier this week, Mori survived a third no-confidence motion against his administration. A member of his own Cabinet indicated Tuesday he believed Mori should step down. *AP*

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# Corners cut before fatal sub collision, says prober

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii—A senior officer visiting the USS Greeneville should have realized that "corners were being cut" before the submarine collided with and sank a Japanese fishing boat, a Navy investigator testified.

Rear. Adm. Charles Griffiths Jr., who led the preliminary investigation into the collision, told a Navy court of inquiry Tuesday that the submarine had fallen behind schedule during a voyage arranged for 16 civilian guests on Feb. 9.

He described a series of missteps and painted a picture of a crew so consumed with putting on a good show for the civilians that standard procedures were ignored.

Capt. Robert Brandhuber, chief of staff of the US Pacific Fleet's submarine force, accompanied the civilians on the tour. He was the highest ranking officer aboard the submarine that day and could have intervened if necessary.

Brandhuber should have "had a sense that corners were being cut" during preparations for the surfacing drill that led to the fatal collision, Griffiths said in response to questions from the panel of three admirals.

"He probably should have had some signals going off in his mind that things were being hurried," Griffiths said.

Later, Brandhuber "brooded" about this issue when questioned by investigators, Griffiths said.

The court is investigating the collision that left nine Japanese missing, including four teenagers. The probe could lead to courts-martial of the Greeneville's top three officers: Cmdr. Scott Waddle; his executive officer, Lt. Cmdr. Gerald Pfeifer; and Lt. j.g. Michael Coen, officer of the deck during the collision.

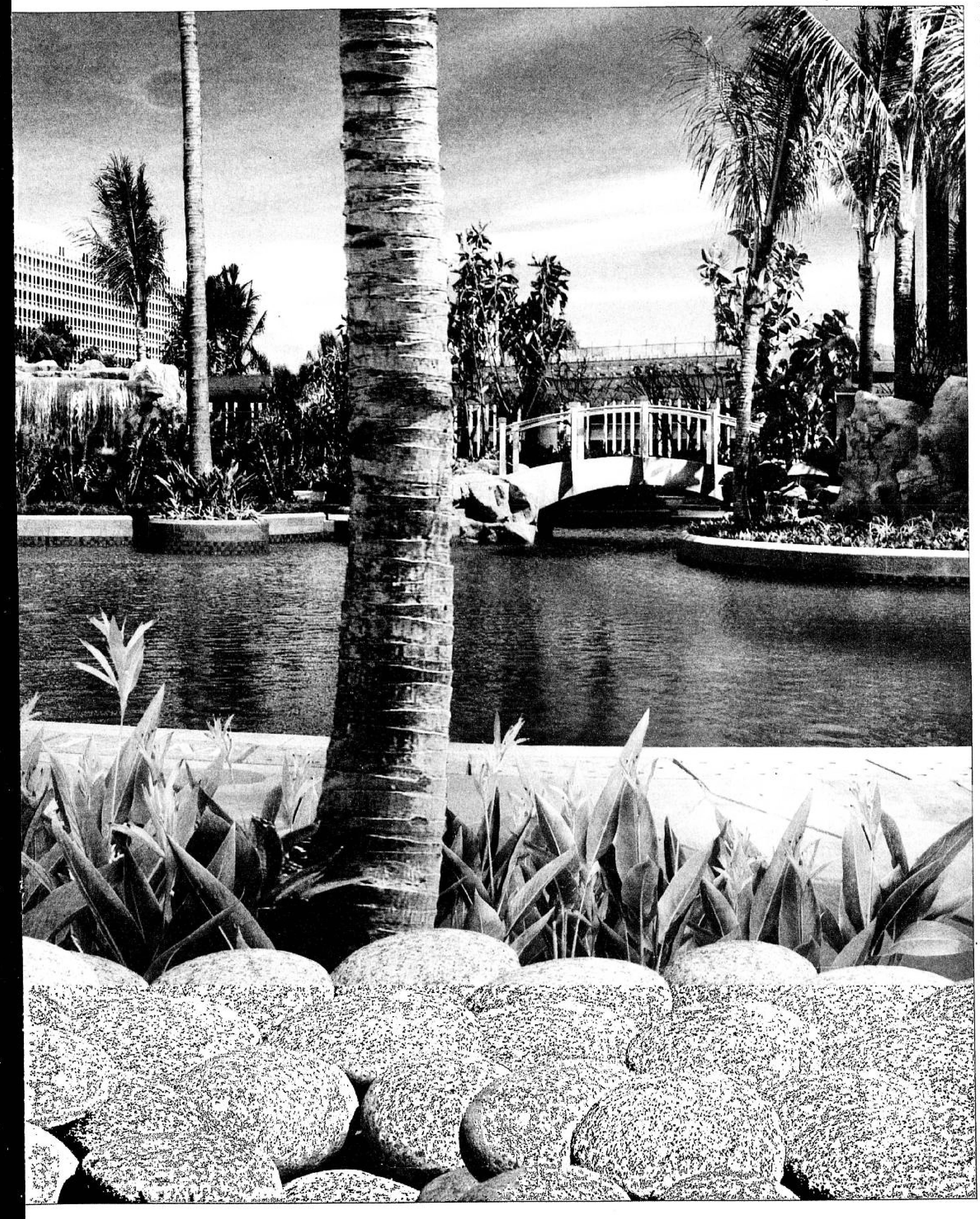
Griffiths has detailed a number of mistakes, which ranged from the submarine rushing to get back on schedule to vital sonar data not getting to the skipper.

He said Waddle hurried through preparations for an emergency surfacing drill, perhaps because the sub was behind schedule. Waddle ordered his crew to get to periscope depth in five minutes, despite procedures that require at least 10 minutes to check for surface vessels, Griffiths said.

The Greeneville, a nuclear attack submarine, was demonstrating the surfacing drill for the guests when it knifed through the hull of the Ehime Maru. The boat was on an expedition to teach high school students from Uwajima, Japan, how to fish.

Griffiths said interviews with Brandhuber and Pfeifer indicated that both thought Waddle was rushing preparations for the surfacing drill but simply didn't speak up.

He said Brandhuber believed things were going "too quick for the complexity of the evolutions and their importance," but that he didn't say anything because as a visiting officer on the ship he felt his concerns were not serious enough to bring to the captain's attention. *AP*



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# EU widens anti-FMD measures

BRUSSELS—The EU's top veterinarians Tuesday banned all live animal transport for two weeks, extended to March 27 a ban on British exports of animals and meat and dairy products and banned animal markets throughout the union to check a foot-and-mouth outbreak ravaging Britain.

A Swedish official who attended the all-day meeting of the Standing Veterinary Committee (SVC) said the ban on markets would be "for at least a week."

The ban on British exports to other EU countries was to have expired this Friday.

In addition, the SVC ruled that all vehicles from Britain have their tires disinfected before entry into any other EU country.

However, the veterinarians reiterated that it was not at this point necessary to vaccinate the entire European herd of livestock susceptible to foot-and-mouth—cattle, sheep, pigs and goats—noting that no case of the disease had been confirmed outside Britain.

There have been suspected foot-and-mouth cases—animals showing the tell-tale lesions on animal hooves and muzzles—in France and Belgium, but initial tests were negative and definitive test results in France showed no signs of the illness.

## Peak

The committee's action came as Britain claimed the two-week-old epidemic could peak and turn the corner this week.

A European Commission spokesperson said at midday the British contingent had assured the SVC the foot-and-mouth epidemic could "peak" sometime this week.

A total of six new cases of the contagious animal virus were meanwhile reported in Britain on Tuesday, bringing the total to 80.

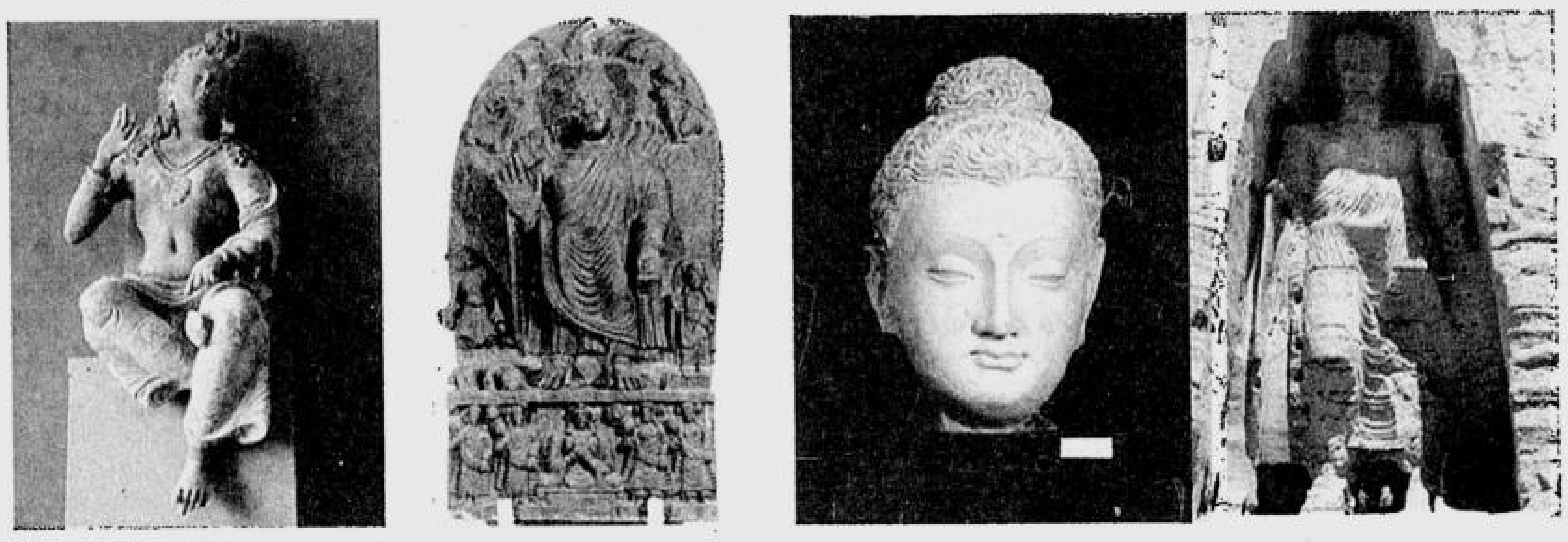
"The UK veterinarians said they expect a peak of this outbreak today, tomorrow or sometime this week," the commission spokesperson said, adding, "All the information they gave was rather reassuring."

Britain's chief veterinary officer, Jim Scudamore, was more cautious, saying before the meeting it appeared that Britain's decision to ban the movement of all livestock on Feb. 23, four days after the outbreak, had produced results.

"So the first evidence is that because we stopped all movements, we stopped the spread of the disease," he told a press conference. "At present it looks like it's under control, although there are cases still appearing and they will continue to appear."

Although the British report was characterized as "reassuring," Pierre Koriene, executive director of the Brussels-based Federation of Veterinarians of Europe, said it would be "extremely difficult" for a country to say when it was out of the woods because of the variable incubation period. *AFP*

# Taliban dynamiting Afghan Buddha statues



**BUDDHIST** statues in Afghanistan. From left, a statue from a Buddhist monastery circa 700 AD, an undated stone carving of the Dipankara Buddha, a stucco bust of Buddha from the 1st to the 2nd century AD, and the world's largest Buddha statue located in northern Afghanistan. REUTERS

KABUL—Taliban officials said dynamite was being used against Afghanistan's famous Bamiyan Buddhas despite the Eid al-Adha Islamic holiday and fresh international protests Tuesday.

The Taliban's ambassador to neighboring Pakistan, one of only three countries which recognizes the fundamentalist regime, told the Afghan Islamic Press late Monday that dynamite had been employed to break up the Buddhas.

"The destruction began on Sunday and nearly one fourth of the two statues has been destroyed," ambassador Abdul Salam Zaeef said, adding the work continued through the start of the holiday on Monday.

He said Tuesday that Taliban Supreme leader Mulla Mohammad Omar had rejected a proposal to build a concrete wall in front of the two Buddha statues in central Bamiyan province.

"The statues will be destroyed in compliance with the order . . . and so far there is no proposal under consideration," Zaeef said.

Taliban officials have said militiamen have been attacking the colossal stone Buddhas with rockets, tanks, gunpowder and tools such as spades and hammers, although the extent of the damage is impossible to verify.

Observers have been refused permission to go to central Bamiyan province, where the two statues, including the largest standing Buddha in the world, were hewn into a sandstone cliff more than 1,500 years ago.

The Taliban militia, which rules most of Afghanistan under a puritanical version of Islamic law, last week ordered the annihilation of all statues to prevent idolatry, sparking an international outcry.

Ahmad Bahram, a spokesperson for anti-Taliban opposition group Hezb-e-Wahdat based in Bamiyan, confirmed only that the Bhuddas had been shelled.

"We have heard that they have fired a few shells at the statues but they have not yet used dynamite," he said, adding that the Taliban had barred locals from leaving Bamiyan city.

Another opposition spokesperson in the Dara-e-Souf valley about 120 km north of Bamiyan, said the Taliban had started shelling them with tanks on Monday.

"The statues have been destroyed partly, but we cannot say to what extent. They are massive and strong and it will take time to totally raze them," he said.

The United States on Monday reiterated its appeal for the Taliban to preserve the statues for future generations.

Contacts were made with the militia's representatives in Pakistan but the Americans were quickly rebuffed, State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher said.

France also said it was pressing on with efforts to save the Buddhist heritage in Afghanistan.

"We are maintaining close contact with all those who are striving to prevent the destruction of Afghanistan's pre-Islamic statues . . . in particular with the countries that have official relations with Kabul," the French foreign ministry said late Monday.

In mostly Buddhist Thailand, the government Tuesday said it "gravely condemns the acts of brutal vandalism and strongly urges the Afghan leaders to immediately stop the destruction of cultural and historical heritage."

Diplomats in Pakistan have privately indicated they do not believe the destruction is as extensive as the Taliban have said, and a Unesco special envoy late Monday insisted the Bamiyan Buddhas could still be saved.

"All doors are not closed. Continuing and new consultations are taking place among theologians in Afghanistan," Pierre Lafrance said.

Lafrance, dispatched on an emergency mission from Europe on Friday, met top Taliban officials in Afghanistan Sunday and is expected to return for further talks after Eid.

But Mulla Omar, in an Eid address Monday, defended his edict and said the destruction of "false idols" was a matter of pride for Afghans.

"Now that we are destroying false idols, the world has made a drama out of this. The Muslims of the world, particularly Afghan Muslims, should use their common sense," the Taliban militia's Radio Shariat quoted him as saying. *AFP*

# China warns against arms sales to Taiwan

BEIJING—After announcing one of its largest hikes in military spending in 12 years, China sought Tuesday to deny weaponry to Taiwan, warning Washington that providing high-tech arms to the island would be dangerous and harm US-China ties.

Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan said selling upgraded Patriot missile batteries and warships with state-of-the-art radars would send "a very wrong signal" to Taiwan's government, inflame tensions and encourage Taiwanese who want to remain separate from China.

"It would only feed their arrogance," Tang said at a news conference on the sidelines of the Chinese legislature's annual meeting. "The US side should recognize the serious dangers involved and rein in its wild horse at the brink of the precipice."

Tang's combative tone appeared aimed at dissuading the administration of US President George W. Bush from stepping up support for Taiwan, an island democracy China views as part of its territory. Beijing has threatened to attack if Taiwan refuses indefinitely to unify peacefully with China.

In Washington, US Defense Department spokesperson Rear Adm. Craig Quigley declined to say whether the 17.7 percent defense spending increase announced by China exceeded US expectations. But he said it was well known that China is modernizing its military.

As for US intentions to sell additional advanced weaponry to

Taiwan, Quigley said, "There is an ongoing debate both within the government of the United States and with the Taiwan authorities as to what are the defensive systems that need to be made available to the Taiwanese for their legitimate defensive needs."

Tang's warnings came after China's finance minister told legislators that the government would boost military spending by 17.7 percent this year, the 12th straight year of double-digit increases for the People's Liberation Army. It was the third-highest increase since 1990, surpassed only by hikes of 21 percent in 1995 and 18 percent in 1994.

Defending the increase, Tang said the United States' proposed $310-billion defense budget dwarfed Beijing's $17.07 billion.

"Although you could draw the conclusion from a couple of figures that China's defense spending has increased significantly, the defense budget is the smallest among major nations," Tang said.

China's actual defense spending is thought to be up to five times the official budget. China is believed to be spending more than $1 billion a year on foreign weaponry, and has bought Russian destroyers that could threaten a US Navy attempt to aid Taiwan in the event of Chinese attack.

In turn, Taiwan is seeking decommissioned Kidd-class destroyers from the United States. It is also interested in Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, equipped with the formidable Aegis radar system, which tracks more than 200 targets.

Washington, which is obliged by US law to sell Taiwan sufficient weapons to defend itself, is expected to announce a decision by next month. Acquiring the warships would be a significant diplomatic and military coup for Taiwan. In recent years, Washington has declined or deferred Taiwanese requests for submarines and destroyers for fear of provoking China and an arms race.

Tang did not say how Beijing would respond to a sale. Asked whether China would station more missiles facing Taiwan or stop cooperating with the Unites States on arms control, Tang said: "We have to look at the attitude of the US"

"I hope the US will come to a sober-minded understanding of the serious dangers involved," he said. *AP*

# Probers seek clues to youth's motive in school shooting

SANTEE, California—The 15-year-old accused of killing two fellow high school students was an "angry young man," but apparently lashed out at no particular target, investigators said.

Charles Andrew "Andy" Williams seemingly shot at random. He expressed no remorse for Monday's shootings at Santana High School, Lt. Jerry Lewis said.

"We don't know if he was mad at the school, mad at students, mad at life, mad at home." Lewis said. "He was an angry young man."

Williams was a new kid in a large school, a child of divorced parents living with his father, a skinny freshman whose skateboard had been stolen—twice.

Over the weekend, friends say, Williams talked so much about taking a gun to school that they frisked him before class Monday. But he was known for pranks, and friends wrote off his comments as one of his frequent jokes.

The father of one friend even called Williams at home over the weekend to ask if there was anything to his talk of bringing a gun to school. He decided there wasn't.

No one seemed to believe the clean-cut kid, who was frequently teased, was about to perpetuate the nation's latest high school blood bath.

The disbelief remained a day after the shooting, which left 13 others injured.

Williams is expected to be arraigned Wednesday as an adult on charges that include murder and assault with a deadly weapon. Dressed in a baggy jail-issue jumpsuit that draped past his ankles, the teen stared at the ground as he was led into juvenile hall Monday by sheriff's deputies.

Bryan Zuckor, 14, and 17-year-old Randy Gordon were killed; 11 other students and two adults—a special education student teacher and a campus security worker—were wounded. Several had been released from area hospitals.

The boy allegedly shot two people in a restroom, then walked into a quad and fired randomly, Lewis said. He stopped to reload as many as four times, getting off 30 or more shots, Lewis said. *AP*

# WHO supporting South Africa's anti-AIDS case

GENEVA—The World Health Organization said Tuesday it was taking extraordinary action to support South Africa's legal battle to import and produce cheap generic anti-AIDS drugs.

South Africa is being sued by 39 pharmaceutical companies, which say the AIDS drug scheme flouts global trade laws.

"Basically WHO supports the South African court case . . . we have been working on supplying legal council to the South African government," said WHO spokesperson Gregory Hartl.

"In general, the WHO does not take positions in legal proceedings. What we have done this time is exceptional," he told a press conference here.

The legal battle over whether South Africa can import cut-price versions of generic treatments rather than the more expensive brand drugs could affect millions of people in poor countries.

Hartl explained that his group felt the 1997 South African law respected the World Trade Organization's TRIPS (trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights) agreement.

"This is certainly within the TRIPS agreement, within the scope of this agreement," he said.

The pharmaceutical companies say the law passed by South Africa's parliament in 1997 violated the TRIPS agreement by allowing the import and production of cheap generic drugs instead of brand-name medicines.

Implementation of the law has been blocked since 1998 by the court action.

Pharmaceutical groups backing the court action include multinational giants Boehringer-Ingelheim, Glaxo Wellcome, Merck and Roche.

Hartl said an initiative by Indian pharmaceutical company Cipla to provide anti-AIDS treatments at a lower cost was a step in the right direction, but still too expensive for widespread use.

"What has been done by Cipla, by other companies, to reduce drug prices of antiretroviral tritherapies over the last year has already been quite amazing," he said.

"The average price, a year ago, was $1,000 to $1,500 for a year's treatment, and it now can be as low as $350 according to the Cipla offer."

But Hartl said that price "is still way beyond means of the average African, way beyond the means of the average health system."

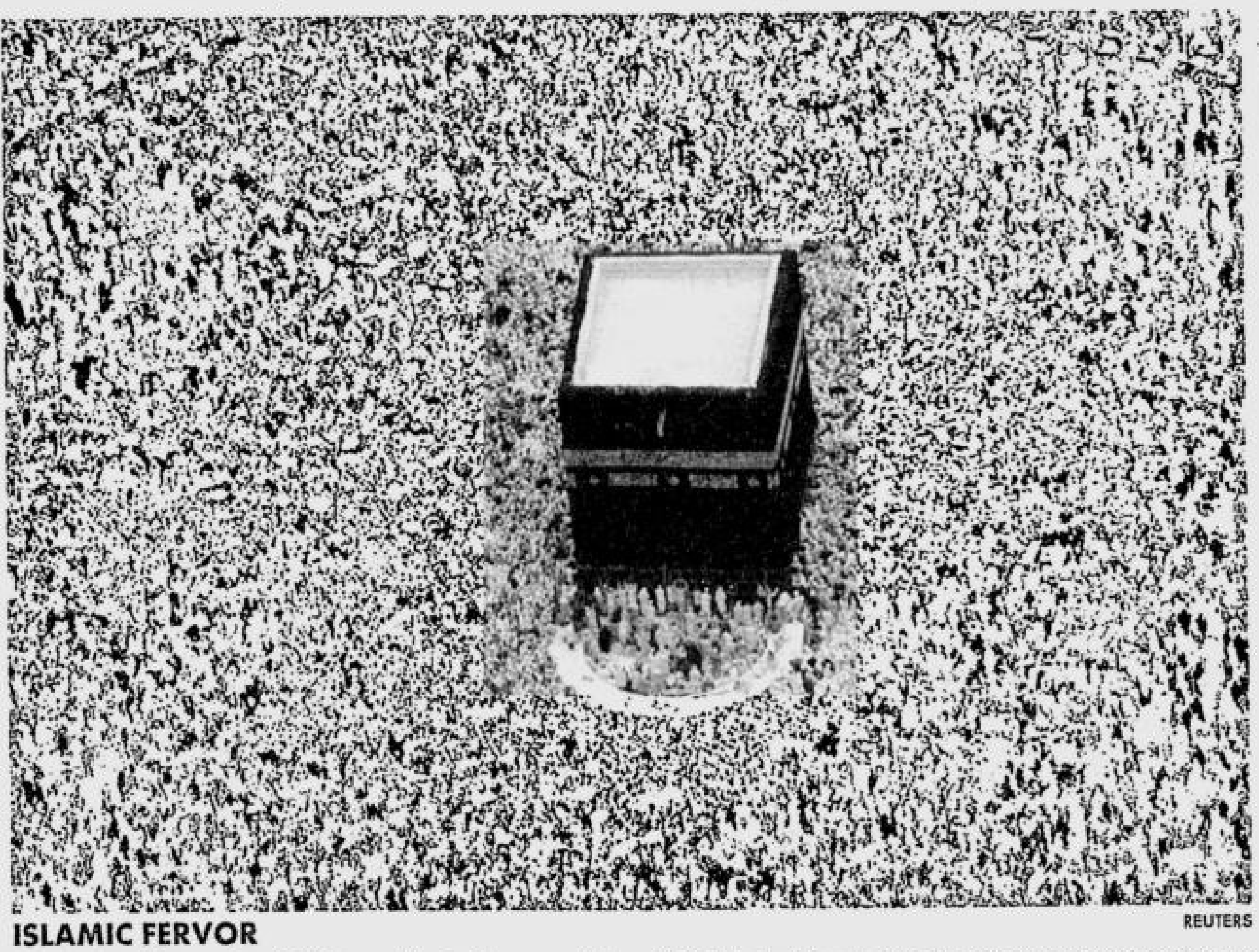
"We have to emphasize that we will do anything possible within the TRIPS agreement to get prices down," the WHO spokesperson said.

Article 31 of the TRIPS accord allows compulsory licensing and government use of a patent without the authorization of its owner, under a number of conditions aimed at protecting the legitimate interests of the right holder.

A national health emergency, such as the one faced by South Africa and other countries hit by the AIDS epidemic, falls within this category, backers of the South African bill argue.

In Paris, the Greens political party said in a statement it was "scandalized" by the drug companies' legal action.

It called on France and Europe to support the rights of a country to produce or import generic drugs and it said that TRIPS allowed a country to claim an exemption to patents in case of national emergency. *AFP*



**ISLAMIC FERVOR** REUTERS

Hundreds of thousands of pilgrims celebrate the second day of Eid Al-Adha (Feast of the Sacrifice) at the Grand Mosque in Mecca, March 6. The pilgrims also spent the fourth day of the pilgrimage in the city of Mina for the stoning of the Jamrat, stone pillars that symbolize the devil.

# Sex workers from 7 countries meet, ask societies' respect

CALCUTTA—More than 5,000 sex workers from India and six other countries wound up a conference in a soccer stadium in this eastern metropolis late Monday, demanding more respect from society and recognition of their plight by governments.

Thousands of women from different parts of India were joined by approximately 115 participants from Nepal, Bangladesh Thailand, the Philippines, Cambodia and Australia for the event, which started Saturday.

When the participants were not holding discussions, they sang songs of liberation, watched plays and puppet shows and danced.

Amena, a sex worker from Bangladesh who uses one name, said she had to face police atrocities, oppressive middlemen and social ostracism in her country.

"But from here we will go back emboldened to fight the oppression," she said in Bengali. "I am inspired by my sisters in Calcutta."

An AIDS prevention program was launched in brothels in Calcutta's Sonagachi red-light district in 1992, reaching out to more than 6,500 people. It has raised awareness among sex workers, but has failed to obtain official recognition for their trade, which is outlawed in India.

"We want the rights of laborers as we see ourselves as workers who work with their bodies like any other trade," said Putul Singh, secretary of the Durbar Women Coordination Committee, which organized the conference. It was funded by volunteer groups working in the brothels.

Sadhana Mukherjee, who for years has bared her body in the dark, dinghy alleys of Sonagachi, led hundreds of other women living in the district at the conference. She said they wanted to fight the impression that a large number of underage girls were entering the flesh trade, an excuse she said that has been used to clamp down on sex workers.

"We are in fact rescuing minor girls from the trade and sending them back to their homes," she said.

Other participants said that it was rarely recognized that most sex workers entered the trade not under coercion or desperation, but voluntarily due to their extreme poverty and lack of skills and jobs.

"If the mainstream society terms prostitution as harmful and denies it its rights, it would be sheer hypocrisy," said Mrinal Kanti Dutta, director of the HIV Intervention Program in Sonagachi.

Dutta said laborers making "bidi," the Indian hand rolled cigarette, other tobacco products and alcohol were also engaged in practices harmful to people, but their services were lawful.

"If sex workers are armed with trade union rights, they can articulate their problems . . . and avail of government schemes for themselves and their children," said Smarajit Jana, a social activist who has led a social awareness program in the brothels. *AP*

# *Cops catch road safety minister speeding*

PERTH, Australia—The Western Australia minister in charge of road safety yesterday admitted she had lost her driver's license after police caught her speeding in a government car.

But Alannah MacTiernan, who also revealed it was the second time she had lost her license, said she had no intention of resigning.

She was appointed Infrastructure Minister, a portfolio which makes her responsible for transport and road safety issues, only three weeks ago after Labor won the state election, unseating the Liberal-National Party government of premier Richard Court.

New Premier Geoff Gallop said MacTiernan would not be removed from office because he did not regard her offence as sackable.

MacTiernan admitted she had been clocked traveling at 98 kph in a 60kph zone as she entered the small town of Pinjarra south of Perth early this week.

Her license has been suspended for three months, meaning she will be driven by a ministerial chauffeur for that period.

MacTiernan admitted she had committed two previous driving offences—speeding and driving without headlights switched on—and that she had lost her driving license for the first time seven years ago.

"I will be using my best endeavors to ensure I do not make these same mistakes again," MacTiernan said.

"I cannot guarantee that I wont make those mistakes." *AFP*

# Pursuing the vision to be "the world-class hospital for all"

On its **423rd anniversary**, the San Juan De Dios Hospital shall further strengthen its resolve to upgrade and update its facilities to continue its glorious tradition of service to Filipinos, especially to indigent patients.

To date, the hospital provides a complete line-up of medical and health care services, medical education and training, nursing services, as well as clinical pastoral care services while also going beyond its premises to conduct various community outreach programs.

Now, as it celebrates its anniversary, the hospital's modern Acute Stroke Unit will be inaugurated. Equipped with Toshiba's cutting edge technology, it will serve as the catalyst towards the hospital's main goal of providing indigent patients with facilities and amenities equal to those offered to paying patients.

# San Juan de Dios Hospital unveils its digital systems for diagnostic excellence.

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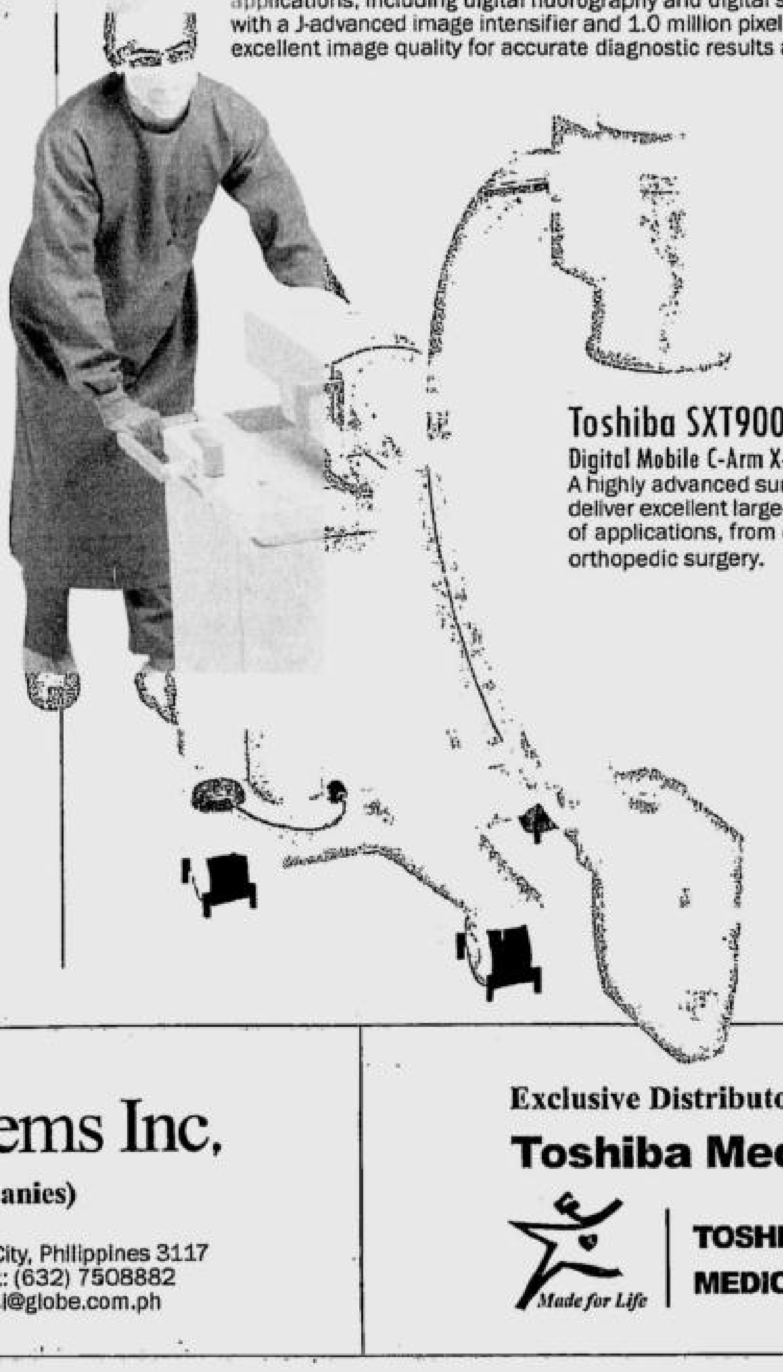

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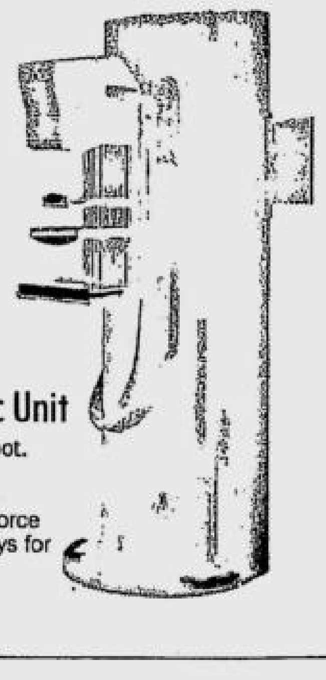

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# Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

## ROUNDUP

### Plebiscite set March 10

THE COMMISSION on Elections has set the plebiscite for the conversion of Tanauan, Batangas into a component city on March 10. Ma. Anglina Matibag, Comelec director for information and education, said voting will start at 7 a.m. until 3 p.m. Tanauan consists of 48 barangays with 350 precincts and 56,000 registered voters.

### PNP seeks help

NAGA CITY—Police Deputy Director General Leandro Mendoza has tapped the Catholic Church and civil society to monitor illegal gambling, especially *jueteng*, and illegal drug activities. Mendoza also asked local media to give police information on local gambling activities. On Friday, Mendoza met with Msgr. Leonardo Legazpi over the issue of *jueteng* and drugs in Camarines Sur. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

### Police chief reassigned

SAN FERNANDO CITY—The police chief of Balaoan, La Union, has been reassigned while eight policemen under him were transferred following the recent politically motivated killings and the burning of the public market there. Supt. Samuel Diciano, La Union police director, reassigned Supt. Pedro Ubaldo to the regional police office here to oversee the implementation of the election gun ban. Diciano said he reassigned Ubaldo and the eight policemen because as natives of Balaoan, they should be impartial in the investigation of the killings and other cases in the town.

*Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

### Waste conversion project

ILAGAN, Isabela—The provincial board has approved the implementation of a P37-million waste conversion project in Barangay Cabaruan in Cauayan town. The project, a joint venture of the Cauayan and Isabela provincial governments, would be built with the help of a private firm from India. The provincial government would shoulder P10 million of the project cost while the Cauayan government would assume the rest of the amount.

*Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Central Luzon Desk*

### Rapist pa gets death

ILAGAN, Isabela—A judge here sentenced a man to die through lethal injection for raping his daughter for seven years. Judge Isaac de Alban of the regional trial court found the father guilty beyond reasonable doubt of raping his daughter starting in 1990 when the girl was just 8 until 1997. The girl, now 18, told the court that the last rape took place on March 31, 1997.

*Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

### GSIS warns vs fake checks

COTABATO CITY—The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) here warned banking and business firms against fake GSIS checks. Pacabungan Mamao, GSIS-Cotabato manager, said his office never issued and will never issue fake checks to its clients and advised banking and business officials not to entertain suspicious persons with fake checks.

*Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

### Aggie Act hindered

NAGA CITY—The implementation of the Agriculture and Fisheries Modernization Act, which was designed to deflect the ill effects of globalization on agriculture, has been hindered by a constitutional problem, Rep. Ernesto Herrera said here. The Constitution mandates that agriculture is not a budget priority and that it should not have a bigger budget than education. With some P92 billion for education, agriculture could not get more than what the Constitution mandates.

*Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

### Sin's disclaimer

ANGELES CITY—Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin told leaders of an affiliate of the Konsensiya ng Mamamayang Pilipino 2 here that he had "nothing to do" with the People's Heroes Awards, one of which was conferred to Mayor Carmelo Lazatin, a known supporter of deposed President Joseph Estrada. "I appreciate your vigilance," Sin said in a letter to lawyer Edgardo Pamintuan, convenor of the Coalition for the Ouster of Erap (Core), an affiliate of Kompil 2 in Pampanga. Sin assured Pamintuan he would bring Lazatin's case to the attention of the Council on Philippine Affairs (Copa), the event's organizers.

*Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

## WEATHER FORECAST

**FORECAST:** Extreme Northern Luzon and Southern Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Metro Manila**<br>HI 33° Lo 23° | **Baguio**<br>HI 25° Lo 15° | **Tuguegarao**<br>HI 28° Lo 20° | **Laoag**<br>HI 30° Lo 22° |
| **Clark Zone**<br>HI 33° Lo 22' | **Tagaytay**<br>HI 32° Lo 21° | **Legazpi**<br>HI 32° Lo 24° | **Calapan**<br>HI 31° Lo 23° |
| **Bacolod**<br>HI 32° Lo 24° | **Roxas**<br>HI 31° Lo 25° | **Cebu**<br>HI 32° Lo 25° | **Tacloban**<br>HI 32° Lo 25° |
| **Gen. Santos**<br>HI 31° Lo 23° | **Zamboanga**<br>HI 31° Lo 25° | **Cagayan de Oro**<br>HI 32° Lo 23° | **Davao**<br>HI 31° Lo 24° |

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research

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### 4TH ANNIVERSARY

# RPA-ABB displays firearms

By **Carla Gomez**
*PDI Visayas Bureau*

BACOLOD CITY—The breakaway Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB) celebrated its fourth founding anniversary on Wednesday by displaying its more than 30 high-powered firearms in a parade and review at the public plaza of Salvador Benedicto town, 47 kilometers northwest of this city.

Salvador Benedicto town Mayor Cynthia de la Cruz and San Carlos City Vice Mayor Eugenio Jose Lacson attended RPA-ABB's celebration in Barangay Bagong Silang.

Gov. Rafael Coscolluela questioned the RPA-ABB's display of firearms, saying it might be a violation of the gun ban imposed by the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

"Without any clear agreement between the RPA-ABB and the Philippine government regarding the display and carrying of firearms, I would presume then it is a violation of the Comelec gun ban," he added.

The governor also told the INQUIRER that he has received several calls from different sectors on whether the RPA-ABB is legally allowed to carry and display its firearms.

It was also not known if the firearms carried by the more than 30 rebels were licensed.

The RPA-ABB has a pending request to the government that they be given 100 special permits to carry firearms as stipulated in the Dec. 10 peace agreement. But the Macapagal administration has not yet acted on the request.

The police and the Comelec authorities in Negros could not seem to determine which office was responsible in determining if RPA-ABB violated the gun ban.

Cirilo Nala, Comelec provincial supervisor, said the police officials would have to decide on the matter because the implementation of the gun ban has been delegated to the police.

But Supt. Geary Barias, Negros Occidental provincial commander, said he would clarify with the Comelec on the RPA-ABB's display of firearms.

He added that in the absence of formal guidelines on the "police function" and the carrying of firearms of RPA-ABB members, the rebel group may continue its "police function," provided it has not violated any law and that no complaint has been filed against (it).

The RPA-ABB has been arresting wanted persons and turning them over to authorities as part of its "confidence building" measure for the peace negotiation with the government.

So far, 16 persons have been turned over by the RPA-ABB to the police since last year. The most recent was on Feb. 13 when the rebel group turn in Juniver Hulleza, who was wanted for murder, to Salvador Benedicto police.

Coscolluela said he feared that the absence of these guidelines might be subject to abuse later.

He said Chief Supt. Julius Yarcia, police director for Western Visayas, should follow up the immediate formulation of these guidelines because the police officer is directly involved in the peace negotiation with the RPA-ABB.

RPA-ABB chief Carapali Lualhati said the guidelines should not come from them but from the government.

He added that even before the start of peace negotiations, they have already been performing their police function as part of their confidence building-measures.

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**KILLER BUS VICTIM** ROMEO SANTOS

Twisted metal and body parts were all that's left of a van and its passengers after the van was hit by an RCJ bus bound for Manila to Laoag in Sta. Cruz, Ilocos Sur early Thursday. Two people died in the van.

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# Intensity 3 quake hits Baguio

BAGUIO CITY—A magnitude 3.9 earthquake hit this city shortly after noon Wednesday, causing mild panic here as buildings swayed for nearly 20 seconds.

The quake, felt at Intensity 3 here, hit at 12:03 p.m. due to tectonic movements triggered 39 km northwest of Lingayen, Pangasinan, said Salvador Cesario, Baguio manager of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).

It was traced from the Manila Trench, he said.

A milder aftershock followed at around 12:45 p.m.

The quake was felt at Intensity 2 in San Fernando City in La Union and Dagupan City in Pangasinan, according to Phivolcs instrument readings.

Office workers here went out of downtown restaurants as soon as the quake struck. Schoolchildren were ushered out of their classrooms by their teachers as buildings started shaking.

But some residents shrugged off the momentary panic. Baguio was one of the key cities devastated by the Intensity 7.7 earthquake that killed thousands of people in Northern Luzon in July 1990.

Officials of the Phivolcs station in Pampanga said they received several frantic calls from Baguio City residents inquiring about the quake.

The Phivolcs had recorded mild earthquakes in the area over the last two months but said these were expected since Northern Luzon lies along the Philippine Fault Zone, the Iba-Zambales Fault and the Philippine Trench. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, with a report from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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# Midnight ancestral land titles alarm LGUs

BAGUIO CITY—Indigenous peoples in Baguio City, Zambales, Palawan and Mindanao were issued titles to their ancestral lands and territories by outgoing officials of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples while President Joseph Estrada was being tried for impeachment last January.

The NCIP, chaired by lawyer David Daoas, approved about 600 Certificates of Ancestral Land or Domain Titles (CALTs and CADTs) for an initial 6,158 hectares in Baguio, Davao, Palawan and Zambales, without the knowledge of their regional offices, NCIP sources told the INQUIRER on Sunday.

The sources provided the INQUIRER with documents listing the controversial titles over tracts of land as large as 300 hectares within the Bataan side of the Subic Bay Freeport, to as small as 267 square meters in Baguio.

Critics in the NCIP said the CALTs and CADTs were "midnight" documents, signed two days before the NCIP commissioners ended their terms of office on Feb. 23.

Most were processed by a task force answerable only to Daoas, an NCIP lawyer said in an internal memorandum obtained by the INQUIRER.

Daoas, in a telephone interview on Monday, admitted signing the documents as early as December last year but stressed that the outgoing NCIP commissioners merely pursued the processing of some 15,000 ancestral land claims nationwide to their logical end.

He said the NCIP commissioners are prepared for a major backlash from leaders of the Chamber of Mines, real estate industry as well as local governments affected by the titles' coverage.

Ibaloi heirs of Maximino Carantes, for example, now have CALTs for property inside the forested Camp John Hay. The same heirs also hold CALTs inside the Baguio Economic Zone, which they sued when the Philippine Economic Zone Authority tried to eject them to accommodate a firm leasing a site inside the zone.

Aeta communities in Bataan now own more than 300 hectares of their ancestral domain inside the Subic freeport, although Daoas said the original certificate of ancestral domain claim there had the concurrence of zone authorities.

But a formal petition, seeking the review of CALTs, had been submitted this week to President Macapagal-Arroyo by the 1087 Dontogan Neighborhood and Lot Owners Association Inc.

Jovita Rosado, president of the group, accused an Ibaloi claimant of threatening to eject them from lands they now owned by virtue of a CALT.

Daoas said "abused CALTs used to harass non-indigenous Filipinos" could imperil the credibility of the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (Ipra).

But he said the titles were the best way for government to address indigenous people's rights, as well as provide support to poverty-stricken indigenous Filipinos.

"It would be good if someone raises this before the courts because it would test the law, finally," he said.

These titles become the first set to be processed since the constitutionality of the Ipra was brought before the Supreme Court by retired Justice Isagani Cruz.

Cruz argued that Ipra violated the Regalian Doctrine, which presupposes that the State had complete administrative control over its natural resources.

Ipra subscribes to the Cariño Doctrine, a United States Supreme Court ruling favoring Ibaloi rancher Mateo Cariño's stake over Camp John Hay against the claims of the country's American colonial government.

The Supreme Court junked the petition in December last year, after failing to break a 7-7 vote.

However, none of the documents listed heirs of Mateo Cariño, whose stake includes Camp John Hay now being converted into a multibillion-peso tourism estate by the Bases Conversion Development Authority. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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# Left hits pols in party-list bid

NAGA CITY—At least two party-list groups have denounced the Commission on Elections for allowing mainstream and traditional political parties in the party-list system.

Crispin Beltran, a nominee in the party-list group Bayan Muna, said the participation of political parties like Aksyon Demokratiko, Kilusang Bagong Lipunan, Laban ng Masang Pilipino, Lakas-NUCD and other political parties have narrowed the chances of the marginalized sectors.

Beltran said the groups that the Comelec allowed to participate in the May elections are affiliated with political parties. They have also grown to 213 from 106 in 1998.

He said the 213 party-list groups that the Comelec accredited will compete for 52 congressional seats.

"I am afraid the marginalized sectors represented in the party-list groups are going to be crowded out," Beltran said.

Martin Diño, a member of party-list group Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption, said it is also possible that the party-list groups will not meet the percentage of votes needed to qualify them for a congressional seat.

Diño said this happened in 1998 when the Supreme Court disallowed some 38 party-list groups in Congress for failing to win the required number of votes.

Beltran said there were only 14 qualified party-list groups given congressional seats with a minimum of 180,000 votes because of the lower number of registered voters that time.

He said in this year's election, with some 32 million registered voters, one party-list group would have to win at least 640,000 votes to qualify for one congressional seat should all voters cast their votes.

Diño said the political parties listed in the party-list groups in several names have the advantage of machinery nationwide. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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# Kidnapped girl rescued in Gensan

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Another banker's daughter was abducted here Tuesday afternoon, the second in four days, but was rescued several hours later from a suspected female kidnapper.

Supt. Conrado Laza, city police chief, identified the victim as Mika de la Cruz, 8, a second grader at the Notre Dame of Lagao and a daughter of a Metrobank employee.

Police named the suspect as Flordeluna Ripoponio, who was arrested several hours after she took the girl who was on her way home from school at around noon Tuesday.

Chief Insp. Henry Dazo, Lagao police chief, said Ripoponio "fetched" the victim and brought her to Purok Saludin in Barangay Labangal where she was made to change her clothes.

The suspect then brought the victim to Polomolok town in South Cotabato but they returned to the city to call the victim's family and demand a P50,000 ransom.

At 3 p.m. Tuesday, Ripoponio instructed Geraldine Zapanta, the victim's aunt, to bring the money to a hut near the Monterey Farms along the national highway in Polomolok town.

She again called an hour later, instructing her that the money be instead delivered to a small oil store in Barangay Lagao.

The victim's relatives coordinated with the Lagao police station, resulting to Ripoponio's arrest.

Dazo said the suspect claimed she was forced to abduct the girl upon orders of a certain Nonoy of Barangay Palkan, Tupi, South Cotabato.

Ripoponio claimed Nonoy threatened to kill her if she would not follow him.

Ripoponio also named a certain Jun as the mastermind.

Maj. Sam Deles, spokesperson of the 601st Army Brigade, said the incident was a case of mistaken identity.

Based on intelligence reports, Deles said, the original target of the group was a member of the prominent Banares clan, who owns a poultry farm in Barangay Conel.

Deles said they received reports that Ripoponio's husband works with the Banares poultry farm.

"Based on our reports, the latest kidnap incident was a result of a mistaken identity as the real target was a scion of the Banares family," Deles bared.

Meanwhile, the police and military are eyeing Commander Tahir Alonto of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front lost command as the leader behind the kidnapping of a bank executive and his daughter here over the weekend.

Leonel Sinda, manager of Consumers Bank here, was left behind by the kidnappers, but Janice, 20 and a senior college student at the Philippine Women's College in Davao City, remains in the hands of her abductors. *Allen Estabillo and Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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# Dirty tricks plague Davao Sur campaign

DIGOS CITY—Dirty tricks continue to plague the election campaign here.

On the provincial level, rumors of alleged failing health continue to hound Lakas candidate for governor Antonio Sunga and reelectionist Rep. Douglas Cagas.

Rumors say Sunga, 63, is dying from various diseases and may not survive the election period.

"I do not know how this issue came into being but I believe it started when I sought medical attention for colds several weeks ago. There's nothing serious about that illness. In fact, I am back to playing tennis," Sunga said.

Pablo Villaber, a candidate for the 1st congressional district, also alleged that Cagas is suffering from a serious illness.

In several press conferences here since the election fever started, Villaber quoted "A-1" information claiming that Cagas twice collapsed inside the session hall of the House of Representatives.

"You can see it in his face. He is very frail," Villaber, a businessman who lost to Cagas in 1998, said.

But Cagas, in a later interview with reporters, laughed off the rumors.

"I would not challenge Villaber to a boxing match because he is far older than me. But I don't know how a very sick man like me, as alleged, would be able to engage in rigid exercises as cycling and jogging," he said.

Apparently to drag down the candidacy of his brother Reynerio for governor, Governor Rogelio Llanos is also reported to have misspent millions in government funds from his peace and order campaign allocation.

In the municipal level, charges of corruption also suddenly became the main issue against several mayoral candidates, including Vicente Fernandez of Matanao and Joel Ray Lopez of Sta. Cruz.

In this city, rumors have also started to circulate that reelectionist Mayor Arsenio Latasa had been disqualified by the Commission on Elections to run in the May 14 elections.

But Pedro Reganit, provincial election supervisor, said the petition for disqualification filed against Latasa has not been acted on yet.

*Allan Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

# Puwersa: Erap escape stories 'baseless'

**(From page A1)**

Senatorial candidate Edgardo Angára said Estrada had decided to forego the sortie to prepare a motion asking the Supreme Court to reconsider its landmark ruling upholding his successor's presidency and stripping him of immunity from prosecution.

"He still needs to consult with his lawyers" on the motion, which has to be filed by the end of next week, Angara said.

But the former executive secretary did not discount the possibility that the surveillance by the police and National Bureau of Investigation could have influenced Estrada's decision to cancel.

"I don't know whether that affected his decision but it could (have). You know, when you feel harassed and you're under strict surveillance, you won't enjoy going out," Angara said in an interview.

### 'Malicious'

The PMP statement said the "malicious series" of stories about the escape attempts was only meant to establish "a reason (for the government) to ban (Estrada) from campaigning in the provinces."

The INQUIRER had quoted a senior military official as saying that the Armed Forces had received intelligence information that the former President had called off three attempts to leave the country to avoid arrest and prosecution. Estrada faces plunder and graft cases that could soon lead to his arrest.

The statement said the government and "a popular anti-Estrada broadsheet have again concocted a series of baseless stories." The Macapagal administration, PMP claimed, "is set to prevent the victory of the Puwersa coalition at all cost" after "our recent sorties in Mindanao have clearly shown that President Estrada and the opposition enjoy strong and wide support among the people."

"The administration and their political allies do not want the people to hear the side of President Estrada. They do not want to provide him the opportunity to talk to people as he has been doing during campaign sorties."

### Getting out alive

Ejercito had tagged Justice Secretary Hernando Perez as one of the officials who had allegedly tried to persuade the former President to leave. Other family members had pointed to Corona.

In a telephone interview, Corona also denied that he had spoken with Estrada at the latter's home in San Juan.

"I will never do that. I will not go there. I may not be able to get out of there alive," the Palace aide said.

He dismissed Ejercito's claim as a joke. "He is a humorous person. He must be joking," Corona said.

In a radio interview, Perez likewise branded the claim as false. "It is not true. The truth is, I was the one who issued a hold-departure order to stop (Estrada) from leaving the country," he said.

He added that he had opposed plans to "allow Estrada to go into exile; had ordered the National Bureau of Investigation to monitor Estrada's movements; and had warned charter companies that their planes would be impounded and their licenses revoked if they aided him in fleeing the country.

"It was I who asked the Cabinet and the Armed Forces chief of staff to help us thwart the escape of former President Estrada," he insisted.

Corona suggested that Ejercito had missed radio and TV broadcasts in which the spokesperson had repeatedly warned against the possible escape of the former President.

### Danding not ready?

Estrada was expected to join a major rally and a tour of major towns in Samar and Leyte, considered an Estrada bailiwick owing to the well-entrenched Romualdez political clan.

The military was earlier reported to have discovered Estrada's alleged plan to slip out of the country through the southern backdoor while he was in Mindanao late last week.

Before proceeding to Tacloban City, the Puwersa ng Masa senatorial candidates held rallies in Catarman in Northern Samar; Calbayog City and Catbalogan in Western Samar; in Borongan and Guian in Eastern Samar.

They also held another rally in Ormoc City last night.

At the last minute, the coalition canceled campaign rallies scheduled today in Dumaguete City and Negros Oriental, and tomorrow in Bacolod City.

The candidates were supposed to proceed to Negros after wrapping up their rallies in Southern Leyte.

Some Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino campaign officials said the sudden cancellation of the Negros sortie was caused by a "lack of preparation" on the part of provincial kingpin and Estrada ally Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco.

But Angara, who heads the LDP, denied that the group cancelled the sortie at Cojuangco's request.

He attributed it instead to the lack of fuel for their helicopters, which he said were being withheld from them by the Air Force.

# *Sandigan readies jail cell for Estrada*

OUSTED President Estrada would likely be detained in isolation at a special cell once he is formally charged on a host of plunder charges, a television station reported yesterday.

ABS-CBN network aired footage of a freshly painted prison cell with a clean toilet and a soft folding cot. It said the lockup is situated on the premises of a special graft court which would handle the Estrada cases if he is indicted.

Estrada, 63, was ousted in January by a military-backed popular revolt and replaced by his Vice President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

He faces up to eight counts of plunder on allegations he amassed millions in unexplained wealth during his 30-month rule.

Authorities have barred him from leaving and have been placed on high alert to thwart a possible escape plan after the Supreme Court last week ruled that his ouster was legitimate and stripped him of immunity from suits.

However, the court has given him a two-week breathing room, during which no charges may be filed against him while he mounts an appeal on the immunity issue.

The presiding judge of the anti-graft court, Francis Garchitorena, said former movie star Estrada deserved the respect accorded to previous presidents of the country.

"He was the president chosen by the public, he is not just a president of a village organization, he was the president of the Philippines," Garchitorena said on ABS-CBN.

He said court officials have made security arrangements in anticipation of a media frenzy should Estrada be arrested or hauled to court for arraignment.

"(We) can't avoid drama and we already made security arrangements so that if anything like that happens we will just as much as possible shut down the Sandiganbayan," to spectators, he said.

Garchitorena is also set to meet with foreign journalists today to coordinate coverage of the Estrada case should it go to trial. *AFP*

# GSIS purchase of crony stock probed

**(From page A1)**

because I personally did not want to touch Belle Corp., just like Waterfront Philippines," Pascual said in his four-page affidavit.

Pascual said it was "only the instructions of ex-President Estrada which compelled him to acquire such investment."

Carlos Arellano, former chair of the Social Security System (SSS), also said in his affidavit that Estrada had also ordered him to buy Belle Corp. shares.

The testimonies of Pacual, Arellano, Belle Corp. vice chair Willy Ng Ocier and businessman Mark Jimenez form the backbone of the ninth plunder case the DOJ filed with the Office of the Ombudsman against Estrada.

Plunder is a nonbailable offense and is punishable by death.

On Tuesday, the DOJ filed the plunder complaint against Estrada for allegedly pocketing P189.7 million as commission in the purchase of P1.8-billion worth of Belle Corp. shares in 1999.

Perez said on Tuesday that the P189.7-million commission was given to Estrada through businessman Jaime Dichaves, who got it from Ocier.

The money was deposited into Estrada's "Jose Velarde" account with Equitable PCI Bank.

Perez yesterday disclosed that Estrada had been calling Ocier and Arellano to recant the affidavits they had earlier given to government lawyers.

"Not really a threat but asking them not to testify," Perez said. "And I understand that the former President is not too happy, to say the least."

Ombudsman Aniano Desierto can file the plunder cases against Estrada with the Sandiganbayan only on March 23 after the lapse of the Supreme Court's 30-day temporary restraining order suspending the filing of criminal cases against Estrada.

The Supreme Court last Friday ruled that the disgraced President had lost his immunity from suit.

In Davao City, two women groups, Gabriela and the party-list Abanse! Pinay, assailed the Supreme Court for its decision not to lift the TRO.

GATCHALIAN

Rep. Patricia Sarenas of Abanse! Pinay described the decision as an "obstacle" in the search for justice.

"The reason why we could not have a closure on the case of Marcoses is that we failed to punish them. We should learn from that lesson by ensuring that Estrada is (punished)," she said.

Lyda Canson, Gabriela-Davao City chair, also warned that the high court's decision would be used by Estrada to drum up support for his senatorial and local candidates.

"Estrada will use this recent Supreme Court decision to pave the way for his political comeback so that he escape the plunder charges," Canson said. ***Rocky Nazareno and Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

# Erap runs out of ₱60,000 . . .

**(From page A1)**

The disgraced leader has also downgraded his expensive taste for thousand-dollar bottles of wine, which he used to get by the box as "gifts" when he enjoyed the perks of power, the friend told the INQUIRER.

Crates of Chateau Petrus and Cheval Blanc, priced from P30,000 to P60,000 per bottle, used to be delivered frequently to the Palace during Estrada's aborted term, and were reported to be the drink of choice during his alleged "midnight Cabinet" binges.

Estrada, who is charged with illegally accumulating P20 billion worth of bank assets and prime real estate during his two-and-a-half years in office, apparently has to settle for bottles of wine that would cost a minimum-wage worker in Metro Manila his pay for two weeks.

The much cheaper Chateau Margaux (around P3,000 per bottle) was served when Estrada entertained an inner circle of allies at his home on Monday night, the source said.

The former President himself noted the difference during dinner, according to the friend, and lamented: "*Wala na kasing nagreregalo ng red wine sa atin* (No one gives us wine anymore)."

"That night was the first time he took a shot of alcohol in three weeks," the source claimed, denying rumors that the deposed President has been drinking heavily at home since being kicked out of Malacañang.

Estrada, whose favorite brand of hard liquor before he became president was Johnny Walker Blue Label scotch (around P4,000 per bottle), switched to red wine after assuming office, amid talk about his drinking habits and reports of a bacchanalian lifestyle.

The source said that Estrada's appetite has been evidently affected by the daily "flogging" he gets in the media in connection with his failed court battle to reclaim the presidency and his alleged plans to flee the country.

Estrada repeatedly resolved to lose weight during his presidency, and along with certain aides, admitted to using the weight-loss drug Xenical in his battle against the bulge.

A Washington Post article on Estrada's lifestyle, published toward the end of his presidency, portrayed the then head of state's lifestyle as hedonistic, and quoted an aide who compared the atmosphere and ubiquitous buffets in Malacañang to a cruise ship's.

The country saw a thinner Estrada when he resumed public life late last month to personally campaign for his senatorial candidates in Mindanao.

His physical well-being last made headlines when he fell through a four-foot high makeshift wooden stage and slightly injured his left foot at a speaking engagement in Cagayan de Oro.

He has also been claiming that he is scheduled for surgery on his left eye this month. But he said during a recent campaign sortie that he had decided to forego an operation in the United States, even if it meant losing an eye.

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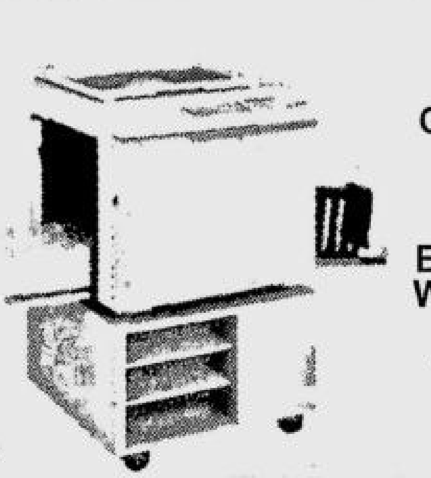

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# PPC leads Puwersa, 8-5, in latest survey

(From page A1)

But shutting out candidates outside the PPC would be an uphill battle after the influential Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) told the Catholic faithful not to limit their choices to the 13 PPC candidates, saying there are heroes of People Power II outside the administration slate.

"Catholics should not limit themselves to the candidates of the administration party. The people should learn to discern who among the candidates of the administration they should vote for and who among the candidates outside the People Power Coalition should they include," Msgr. Hernando "Ding" Coronel, media director of the CBCP, said.

PPC candidates are not alarmed by the survey results, noting that the survey was taken at the start of the election campaign.

They also said that the results did not reflect the "trend" showing that more people were moving to the PPC side, especially after the Supreme Court handed the decision on March 2.

Broadcast journalist Noli de Castro, an independent senatorial candidate adopted by LDP, was No. 1 in the SWS survey. Fifty-six percent of the respondents said they would vote for De Castro.

The other PPC candidates who made it to the top 13 were Sen. Juan Flavier, No. 2 with 45 percent; Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo and Sen. Franklin Drilon, tied at Nos. 3 and 4 with 44 percent; Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. No. 5, also with about 44 percent; Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, No. 6 with 41 percent.

Lawyer Francis Pangilinan, No. 7 with 38 percent, Batangas Rep. Ralph Recto, No. 8 with 37 percent, and Las Piñas Rep. Manny Villar, No. 11 with 32 percent.

Other opposition candidates who made it were former Philippine National Police chief Panfilo Lacson, No. 9 with 35 percent; Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, No. 10 with 34 percent; former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara, No. 12 with about 32 percent; and Senators Juan Ponce Enrile and Gregorio Honasan, who are tied for the 13th spot with 31 percent.

Trailing behind Enrile and Honasan was former Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado.

Dr. Luisa Ejercito Estrada was said to be way below No. 13, as only 20 percent of the respondents cast their vote in her favor.

PPC candidates who did not make it were Quezon Rep. Wigberto Tañada, Bohol Rep. Ernesto Herrera, former Economic Planning Secretary Solita Monsod, former Internal Revenue Commissioner Liwayway Vinzons-Chato and former Bulacan Gov. Roberto Pagdanganan.

Senate sources leaked the survey results to the media after these were presented to the 13 PPC senatorial candidates the other day at the Richmonde Hotel at the Ortigas Center in Mandaluyong City.

### Margin of error

The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

The implementing rules of the Fair Election Act, or Republic Act No. 9006, require that results of a survey can be published if its margin of error is reported.

the Fair Election Act also requires that any survey published include the mailing address and telephone number of the sponsor from whom a written report can be obtained.

Osmeña said the results did not alarm the PPC as the survey was conducted "only less than 10 days after the start of the election campaign."

The PPC candidates have just started to campaign and are not ready with their posters and election materials, according to Osmeña.

He said the SWS survey to be conducted at the end of the month would be "more meaningful" than the Feb. 22-25 survey.

"But at this stage of the game, the survey just merely reflected what has been in the survey for the past three months. The same standings," Osmeña said.

"The trend is already there . . . the ratings of the PPC candidates are getting higher while the other side, it's getting lower," he said.

Osmeña said he gained 10 percentage points in the Feb. 24-25 survey compared with the Feb. 7 survey, also conducted by the SWS.

In Bulacan, Ms Macapagal urged the 1.4 million voters in the province to give their former governor, Pagdanganan, and other PPC candidates a landslide victory.

### Not easy

Pagdanganan said he was optimistic about a PPC sweep.

"We have a fair chance of getting a 13-0 but it's not going to be easy. We have to work hard for it because there are also popular candidates from the other side," Pagdanganan said.

Even if 13-0 is not possible, the PPC will not cheat, according to Monsod.

Herrera said the SWS survey showed that the PPC candidates were improving.

Chato said she was encouraged by the results because she rose from the bottom to No. 26 in just two weeks of campaigning.

Osmeña said the "most significant finding" of the survey was that "the majority of the people, by a significant margin in Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao, had accepted what happened at Edsa."

"I'm sure this would be reflected in the results of the campaign," he said.

The survey showed the top three qualities that people wanted from their senators: Not corrupt (89 percent), will work for the welfare of the poor (85 percent) and are approachable (85 percent), according to PPC sources.

Coronel said that while the 13 PPC candidates represented those who worked for the ouster of Estrada there were other heroes who were not included in the PPC slate.

But he refrained from naming such candidates because of the Catholic Church's policy not to endorse any candidate.

### Mercado, Yasay and Rasul

Coronel reiterated that the CBCP was neither endorsing nor rejecting any candidate but was merely advising the faithful to vote for pro-God, pro-people and pro-environment candidates.

Nonetheless, some of the heroes of People Power II running for senator are Mercado, former Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Perfecto Yasay and former senator and Muslim leader Santanina Rasul.

The CBCP stand encouraging Catholics to consider candidates outside the administration party came after militant organizations branded some of the PPC candidates, including reelectionist Franklin Drilon and former Speaker Manuel Villar, as traditional politicians.

"We stress that there is no Catholic vote, although we would be issuing guidelines for the faithful to consider when they choose their candidates in the elections. We would be coming out with these guidelines next week after the CBCP assembly," Coronel said.

Mercado is running as an independent although the LDP has adopted him.

Mercado, along with Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes and the rest of the military's top officials, withdrew their support for Estrada, triggering a series of resignations from the Estrada Cabinet.

Yasay testified at the Senate impeachment trial of Estrada that the former President tried to pressure him into clearing Dante Tan in the BW Resources stock scandal.

Yasay is running as an independent candidate after he was not named to the administration slate.

Also left out of the administration slate is former Senator Rasul. She is running under the banner of the United Muslims for Democracy and Peace, which has dissociated itself from the Lakas-NUCD coalition identified with former President Fidel Ramos and the current administration.

Rasul helped mobilize Muslim groups at the height of People Power II.

# RP was on brink of debt moratorium

(From page A1)

later that would have run out," he added.

### Sleepless nights

"OK, we had $11 billion in net international reserves, $14 billion in gross international reserves, but if every month you could no longer renew the credit line . . . There were a lot of sleepless nights," Buenaventura said.

"I said we probably could last under this scenario for four months. I didn't know if we could have sustained this beyond February because we would begin to run out of ammunition.

"Ultimately, there was a peaceful transition."

The last time the country was crippled by an economic crisis was in 1983 when the government suspended foreign debt payments in the aftermath of the assassination of opposition leader Benigno S. Aquino Jr.

Prices of goods shot up, interest rates soared to as high as 40 percent, businesses shut down and thousands of workers were laid off.

The political and economic crisis was resolved when the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos fled to the United States at the height of Edsa People Power I in 1986. Corazon Aquino was installed as President.

In the case of Estrada, the crisis began last October when his drinking and gambling buddy, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, accused him of accepting millions in "jueteng" payoffs and pocketing tobacco tax kickbacks.

The House of Representatives impeached Estrada on corruption charges the following month, paving the way for his Senate trial last December.

The trial collapsed in January when Estrada's allies in the Senate refused to allow the prosecution to open pertinent bank documents, sparking Edsa People Power II.

Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was sworn in as President after the military, police and most of the Cabinet members withdrew their support from Estrada.

The peso, which had been hovering at 45 to the dollar mark, fell below that level during the "Juetengate" crisis.

The currency reached a low of 51.9 by November, plunging to a historic low of 55.9 to the dollar when the impeachment trial collapsed.

The peso has since recovered after Ms Macapagal's takeover, hitting 47.72 to the dollar on Wednesday.

For his part, Buenaventura jacked up key interest rates by 400 basis points last October to protect the peso but he began to gradually reverse the process in December because of the disastrous effect on the economy.

BUENAVENTURA

At its height, the bank's key overnight lending rate was at 17 25 percent.

### Under pressure

Buenaventura said he was under pressure to raise rates even more.

"There were experts in the business community, who felt very strongly then that the central bank should raise interest rates to 40 percent," the governor said.

"At the same time, there were people who supported me when I said I did not agree with that.

"I felt it was the wrong solution to a problem that was political and not economic. We had a political crisis and not an economic crisis and therefore using an economic tool was not going to work."

But it was a close call, he said.

"It was like holding a razor-sharp knife by the blade without bleeding to death," he said.

"You try to do a balancing act hoping that the political solution will be there sooner rather than later."

A day before Buenaventura had a talk with the foreign correspondents, the central bank announced that a syndicate of 19 foreign banks had agreed to lend the government a total of $740 million.

The signing of the loan agreement—the first under the Macapagal administration—has been scheduled on March 15.

Buenaventura said the loan agreement indicated "the improved confidence of the international financial community in the Philippine economy."

*Reuters*

# BSP to step up fight . . .

(From page A1)

relax existing legal barriers to fight money laundering, Buenaventura told a media briefing.

But he assured depositors they would not be harassed should Congress pass the proposed laws against money laundering.

The Macapagal administration has agreed to support the proposed measures as part of international efforts to check money laundering, largely involving illicit drug money.

The Paris-based Financial Advisory Task Force (FATF), set up by the Group of Seven most industrialized nations, last year placed the Philippines on its list [illegible] "uncooperative" countries in figh[illegible] money laundering.

The Philippines became the only Asian nation on the list, made up mostly of tax havens in the Caribbean and the Pacific Ocean. The FATF compiled the list to track the movement of shady funds.

The country's strict bank secrecy law has often made it difficult for monetary officials to detect money launderers, but the government has since been making efforts to improve its image.

Buenaventura said the proposed law allowing the central bank's policy-making Monetary Board to look into deposits of more than P50 million would restore the BSP's authority "to inquire into a deposit account of a suspicious nature."

"The provision was there before for some 50 years and it was not abused but due to some strange reason in the new law passed (in 1993) that provision was removed," he said.

Buenaventura said banking guidelines regarding the examination of foreign currency deposit accounts would make it mandatory for non-Philippine resident depositors to sign a voluntary waiver on secrecy upon opening an account in any Philippine-based bank.

He said other steps that would bring Philippine anti-money laundering laws closer to global standards included requiring foreign exchange corporations to report details of all transactions, and banks to establish the true identity of clients.

Banks have also been asked to report suspect transactions while foreign exchange companies have been required to demand supporting documents from resident buyers involved in transactions involving $10,000 or more. *AFP*

# GMA asked: Free 25 on Int'l Women's Day

(From page A1)

Gabriela-Davao City chair Lyda Canson said this would not only show the President's solidarity with women but also boost the government's peace efforts following the release Monday of eight political prisoners.

Maj. Gen. Ernesto Carolina, chief of the Army's 7th Division, said some 100 teenaged members of the New People's Army had been arrested for the past two years nationwide, most of them in Mindanao.

Carolina said, however, that the military commands that arrested the teenaged rebels had turned them over to the Department of Social Welfare and Development, which in turn put them in rehabilitation centers or in the custody of their parents.

Today, Gabriela members in the city are mounting a clothesline atop a 10-wheel truck in an activity designed to show that increasing numbers of women are asserting their rights and pushing for people's issues.

Aprons stating issues comprising the women's agenda will be hung on the clothesline.

Among the issues are the immediate release of all political detainees, especially the women, children, ailing and disabled; immediate prosecution and imprisonment of Joseph Estrada and his cronies; scrapping of the government's liberalization, privatization and economic deregulation policies; termination of the RP-US Visiting Forces Agreement; end to militarization in Mindanao; and implementation of the United Nations Convention on All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

### Peace agenda

Abanse! Pinay Rep. Patricia Sarenas told the 2nd Davao Women's Summit yesterday that her party-list group would also reiterate to Ms Macapagal its position that peace and development must be kept on top of the government's agenda.

According to Sarenas, it was the women and children who suffered most when Estrada launched his all-out war against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front last year.

She said Abanse was also challenging the Macapagal administration to be responsive to the women's agenda, which includes the appointment of women to at least 30 percent of key positions in the government and the establishment of a machinery that would strengthen the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women.

In Cagayan de Oro City, Laetitiamarie Garcia, spokesperson of Gabriela-Misamis Oriental, told the INQUIRER that despite the added workload of women in business establishments, they were still receiving less pay than men.

Garcia said most women were being paid less than the required minimum wage and had no security of tenure because they were hired on a "contractual" basis.

She said women were being sexually harassed in workplaces but were keeping quiet so as not to lose their jobs.

Garcia also accused the Philippine government of prostituting women.

Gabriela has documented 1,002 prostituted women in Cagayan de Oro City, 400 of them employed in various bars and the rest, "streetwalkers."

Garcia said the government was acting as a "pimp" by collecting taxes and other revenues from business establishments exploiting women.

### Adopted trees

In Quezon City, 18 women relatives of Filipino national heroes will adopt today 18 mahogany trees replanted at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani on Quezon Avenue and along North Avenue.

Acting Environment Secretary Joemari Gerochi said the adoption ceremony would serve to mark International Women's Day and highlight the role of women in the government's mission to preserve natural resources and the environment.

The ceremony will be held in cooperation with the Bantayog ng mga Bayani foundation through its executive director, Dr. Quintin Doromal.

"The adoption by these civic and environment-minded women will ensure the survival of the mahogany trees, which are more than 50 years old now. In a novel way, they continue to be examples of notable women like Gabriela Silang, Melchora Aquino, Aurora Quezon and Corazon Aquino, among others," Gerochi said.

The trees were balled and replanted in connection with the Quezon Avenue Interchange Project of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

Gerochi said a total of 91 mahogany trees were spared the axe when the DPWH agreed to his proposal that it revise its design by providing a center island.

Under the original design, 77 mahogany trees would have been cut.

The DPWH and three nongovernmental organizations signed a memorandum of agreement with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to ensure the survival and maintenance of the mahogany trees, Taraw palms and other trees that were affected by the road project.

The agreement was signed in Ms Macapagal's presence after Tuesday's Cabinet meeting in Malacañang. ***With reports from Ellen P. Red, PDI Mindanao Bureau; and Cynthia D. Balana in Manila***

# RP Asia's best booth . . .

(From page A1)

ard J. Gordon in ITB ceremonies yesterday.

This was the first time the Philippines won in the best booth competition since the country participated in ITB, according to Venus Tan, tourism attaché in Frankfurt.

In awarding the Philippine booth, Gordon's ubiquitous and active presence in the booth was noted by the judges of the competition.

"He even ate styropor-packed lunches at the booth," a beaming Tan said.

Gordon, who headed the Philippine delegation in ITB, commended the DOT-Frankfurt office for a job well done and the Philippine Conventions and Visitors Corp. (PCVC) which coordinated the event.

Gordon said the award was given the Philippines for its complete promotional materials, exciting attractions and engaging presence through cultural dances, and games.

The 200-square-meter booth also featured a video featuring lead Philippine tours.

Gordon noted the tremendous interest in Philippine tourism among wholesalers and travel professionals. Every year, the Philippine BOT joins the global tourism community in this travel fair.

Gordon informed the world market of a "new country, a new leader," who knows the importance of a thriving tourism business to the Philippine economy.

He also said that the Philippine Airlines should resume flights to Europe as soon as possible.

Gordon and the secretary general of World Tourism Organization (WTO), Francesco Frangialli, also led the launch of the Philippine website in German (www.die-philippinen.de) at the Philippine pavilion during the second day of the affair.

Another reason for its winning was the launch of this Philippine website in Germany and the translation of Philippine brochures into German language, Tan said.

ITB lured foreign investors to visit the Philippines and invest in the country, Tan added. Germany ranks first among Europeans who travel out of their own country.

However, Gordon observed that the country needs to get past an image problem involving peace and order.

Last year, 10 Europeans including three German nationals were kidnapped by the Moro rebels, Abu Sayyaf and held hostage in Jolo for 140 days.

"We need to have an effective worldwide public relations campaign," Gordon said, adding that the Abu Sayyaf episode has hurt the country's image to lure visitors to the Philippines.

### Not major setback

Gordon, however, assured the market that peace and order situation, in reality, is not a major setback. He said key cities around the world have their share of violent occurrences but their worldwide promotional presence have communicated to the world that they can continue to travel safely and pleasantly to these destinations.

# Macapagal choice of AFP chief draws flak

(From page A1)

Davao City said it viewed Villanueva as "the executioner of the Moro people" because he "engineered and implemented" ousted President Joseph Estrada's war policy in Central and Southern Mindanao.

Khadidja chair Evelyn Carias said Ms Macapagal should have considered the "sensibilities" of the Moro people by not appointing to key posts military officers who played important roles in the war against the MILF.

But Malacañang was quick to say that Villanueva's appointment was no indication that Ms Macapagal intended to reprise her disgraced predecessor's war policy in Mindanao.

In separate interviews, acting Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita and the President's spokesperson Renato Corona said Villanueva's prominent role in the war should not be taken against him.

The military and defense establishments also swiftly rallied behind Villanueva.

"He's good guy," said retired general Fortunato Abat, commanding officer of Villanueva in the early 1970s in Mindanao when the Moro secessionist rebellion was just starting to sink roots.

AFP Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Jose Calimlim vouched for his integrity and competence, saying "General Villanueva is a respected officer."

The two officers are "mistahs" in Class 1968 of the Philippine Military Academy.

Lidasan warned, however, that peace talks between the government and the MILF could be derailed if Villanueva took over the top AFP post.

### Political statement

Marie Hilao-Enriquez, secretary general of the human rights group Karapatan, said Villanueva's appointment could be a "political statement" of the militarist clique in the Macapagal administration.

"Although GMA claimed that Villanueva was her personal choice for the post, I doubt it. His appointment could have been pushed by the military around her, like (Executive Secretary Renato) De Villa," Enriquez said in a separate interview.

"I foresee that it won't be a rosy future for the state of human rights under his watch," she said.

Enriquez described Villanueva as a "militarist mind" who derived pleasure from a war that did not spare civilians.

At least 900,000 civilians were displaced in the war that cost the government billions of pesos.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan also said the President's choice for the top AFP post betrayed her administration's supposed "policy of peace."

"With Villanueva's record, we cannot help but think of that," Bayan chair Rafael Mariano told the INQUIRER.

Mariano also raised the suspicion that Villanueva's appointment was another "political reward" to the military for turning its back on the Estrada administration.

### Job to do

But Ermita said Villanueva's role in the war was "just a job to do as far as this field commander is concerned."

He said Villanueva had to lead the fight as chief of the Zamboanga City-based Southcom.

"His role in Mindanao is simply part of his duties as he is called upon by the situation to perform," Ermita said. "Everybody had a role then. Villanueva got his."

In a phone interview, Corona said that "as a soldier, (Villanueva) was not in a position to say no" to Estrada's war policy.

"You should not take that against him. He was just obeying his Commander in Chief (and) his superiors," Corona said.

Both Ermita and Corona were all praise for the President's decision to pick Villanueva, saying he had earned the respect of his men for his professionalism and expertise in the field.

"That's a very excellent choice by President Macapagal. You know, General Villanueva is one of our most competent senior military officers these days," Ermita said.

He also said Villanueva "should be able to address" the questionable financial transactions that recently surfaced in the military.

Corona said the President had known Villanueva since her days as a senator.

"She was in a position to observe the leadership quality and field experience" of Villanueva, he said.

Besides, Corona said, in most of the President's consultations with military officers and rank and file, Villanueva's name "always cropped up as one of the frontrunners."

Corona also said Ms Macapagal had gone through Villanueva's records and saw that he was "not linked to any scam."

It was the other contenders' alleged links to corruption in the military that were supposedly instrumental in dousing their chances to be named AFP chief of staff.

But for Ermita, the penchant of some of the contenders to call attention to themselves through the media also got them into trouble.

"There was intense jockeying for the position. Other (contenders) may have thought that just because they were making noise, they will get the President's nod," he said.

Villanueva, he noted, was "disciplined" enough not to do this.

### Literacy patrols

Abat recalled that as a young officer, Villanueva conceptualized what eventually became known as the Army Literacy Patrols (ALPS).

These units are composed of officers and enlisted men whose mission is to bring education to far-flung areas.

Abat said the ALPS program was recognized and later given an award by the education department's Bureau of Informal Education.

"It was the Army's version of the Thomasites, the teachers brought in during the early American period," said Abat, who chairs the influential Federation of Retired Commissioned and Enlisted Soldiers, and who, like Villanueva, served as commanding general of the Army.

But Abanse! Pinay Rep. Patricia Sarenas, a co-convenor of the Mindanao Peace Advocates Conference, said the President should have consulted with sectors other than the military before she made her choice for the top AFP post.

She said that while she respected Ms Macapagal's prerogative to choose, the voices and views of the sectors most affected by the war should have also been given weight.

Khadidja's Carias said Villanueva should be investigated for culpability in the war that left a number of Moro villages in shambles. ***With reports from Carlito Pablo in Manila; Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ■ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

## NCR pockets 7 swim golds

NATIONAL Capital Region scooped seven gold medals in swimming to show the way yesterday in the Private Schools Athletics Association (Prisaa) national championships in Angeles City. The Big City tankers easily took seven of 14 final swimming events to make up for its anemic showing in athletics and remain on track in its bid to recapture the overall title it won in 1994.

## Sampras, Agassi bundled out

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona—Top-seed Pete Sampras stumbled out of the gate again as he was upset by Australian Andrew Ilie yesterday in the first round of the $400,000 Franklin Temple Tennis Classic. Sampras double-faulted at match point as the 24-year-old Ilie took a 3-6 7-6 (7-2) 6-4 victory in his first meeting against the 13-time Grand Slam champion. No. 2 Andre Agassi was eliminated by Spaniard Francisco Clavet 6-1 6-7 (2-7) 7-5.

*Reuters*

## Tuason 'special children' guest

BAGUIO CITY—Philippine Sports Commission Chair Carlos D. Tuason Tuesday promised to continue supporting the activities of "mentally challenged members of our society" as he ushered in the Special Olympics Philippines' National Games at the Malcolm Square of the People's Park here.

Saying that "sports dispels differences and knows no discriminations," Tuason thanked the organizers, led by Nic Jorge, and expressed his delight that "the Special Olympics has achieved its main goal of providing enough "space" within which our special children and special sector can fully mingle and participate."

Five-hundred athletes, teachers and volunteers are participating in the Special Olympics, which began with a parade in the street.

Vice Mayor Daniel Farinas welcomed the participants and guests, while Alex Babst, Philippine Special Olympics Foundation director, introduced Tuason. PSOF president Nic Jorge gave an inspirational talk after Tuason's touching speech.

Among the event's supporters are Mayor Mauricio Domogan, STI Baguio, Team Otis, Rivers of the Living Water Catholic Community, Milo, Lee and Inah Kierulf, Cricket Maniego and Mrs. Purita Palaganas.

Special Olympics International was founded by Ethel Kennedy Shriver to provide athletic competition for the mentally challenged.

## Firebird Anito derby today

MORE than 50 quality and non-stop fights are lined at Mandaluyong Coliseum as the "6th Ucap/Firebird Anito BM 6-Cock Derby" enters its championship round beginning at 6 p.m. today. Derby hosts are hotelier Biboy Enriquez and Palawan sportsman Mauro Prieto with Sagupaan Super Feeds and Lakpue Drug Inc. as sponsors.

Ten cockers from a field of 42 posted two victories each Tuesday night. They are Mauro Prieto and Mike Romulo (Phantom Combine), Ucap president Butch Macasaet (BJ Greenwood I), Tony Litonjua and Patrick Antonio (Starwars Sagupaan), Rudy Jingco (Sto. Cristo GP), AARR (Vince Diaz), Vic Yu (King Boxer), Pepito Ngo (Mr. Fatman), Danding Cojuangco (Bumble Bee Balbina), Jun Topacio (AK 225) and Cobra entry.

Meanwhile, the "Special Ucap Excess Derby," with approximately 75 fights, is finally pushing through on March 15, as Ucap members have committed 150 roosters for the event.

## Alarilla cockfest at Big Dome

THE SEVENTH leg of the 15-leg NCA 7-Cock Derby series takes center stage on March 12-14 at the Araneta Coliseum, featuring selected bloodlines of the coutnry's most respected cocker-breeders.

Hosted by Meycauayan Mayor Eddie Alarilla and engineer Romy Panganiban under the auspices of the National Cockers Association, this derby kicks off with the three-cock elimination fights on Monday, March 12, followed by the four-cock finals on Wednesday, March 14. Seeing action are past NCA champions Jessie Viceo (San Rafael), the Alan Tan-Patrick Puno tandem (Capitan III), Big Dome owner Nene Araneta (Thunderbird-Firefly IV), Gerry Fevidal (Geran), Ruel Ricafort and E. Santos (RT-114 Geran Mapalad), Pampanga's Eric Yu (New Guagua Coliseum), and lawyer-sportsman Rudy Salud (Winning Time-DVH).

### INTER-CITIES CHESS

# Gatus bails out Mandaluyong

**Standings after Round 6**
6.0 points—Mandaluyong A
5.0 points—Manila-San Sebastian College
4.5 points—Manila, Panabo, Davao City
4.0 points—Muntinlupa A, Muntinlupa B, Bacolod City, Dagupan City, Antipolo City, Calamba, Baguio City, Bocaue
3.5 points—Makati City-Shell, Mandaluyong B, Meycauyan, Angeles (Air Force) A, Guagua, Tagbilaran City, Iloilo City.
3.0 points—Caloocan-Gonzales Law Office, Gen. Santos City, Muntinlupa C, Cainta, Koronadal, Tacloban City

By Roy Luarca

**MANDALUYONG A found an unlikely savior in Edmundo Gatus yesterday as it beat Muntinlupa A, 2.5-1.5, and kept top spot in the 2001 National Inter-Cities and Municipalities Chess Team Championship at the Kaban ng Hiyas Auditorium, Mandaluyong City.**

Gatus, atoning for so-so performances earlier, downed Roberto Biron in Board 4 to compensate for the draws posted by his heralded teammates as Mandaluyong A preserved its perfect slate with 6 points in 6 rounds.

Grandmaster Joey Antonio, Fide Master Idelfonso Datu and deaf-mute sensation Liolen Tubianosa were forced to split the point by Muntinlupa A's IM Nelson Mariano, NM Jayson Gonzales and Oliver Dimakiling, respectively, before Gatus broke through.

"It was a difficult position to press for a win. It's a good thing Gatus won," said Antonio, team captain of the top-ranked Mandaluyong A.

With three rounds left in the elimination phase, Mandaluyong A needs only to win once to make the top four which will figure in a crossover knockout game to determine the two finalists.

Mandaluyong A also bested Manila-San Sebastian College, 2.5-1.5, in the fifth round Tuesday.

Manila-SSC bounced back with a 2.5-1.5 victory over Bacolod City yesterday, gaining solo second at 5 points in the tournament organized by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines and sponsored by Viva Mineral Water (La Tondena Distillers), Unilab Inc., DILG, Philippine Sports Commission and Mandaluyong City.

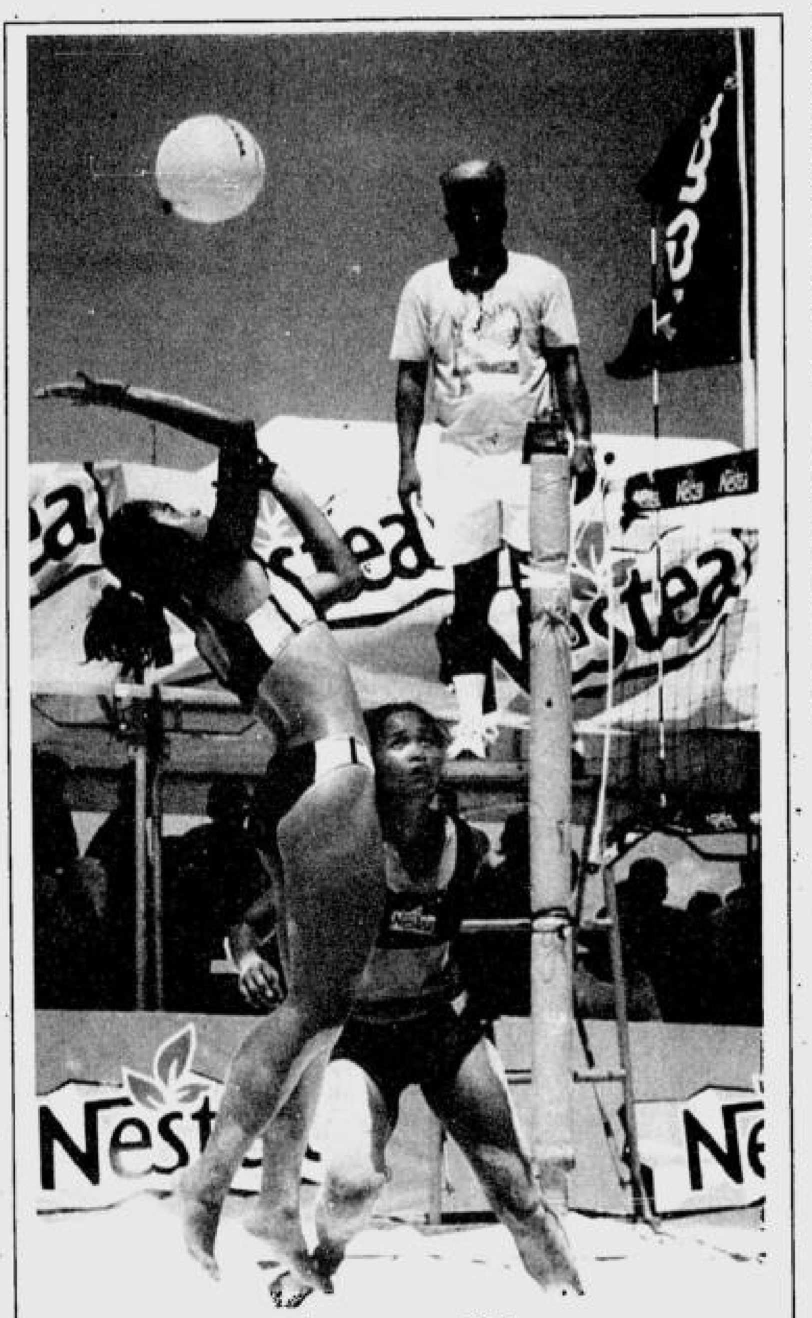
Fourth-seeded Manila and surprise package Panabo (Davao del Norte) fought to a 2-2 tie to stay within striking distance with 4.5 points in the company of Davao City, which clipped Mandaluyong B, 2.5-1.5.

NM Alexander Lupian continued his brilliance for Panabo as he extracted the full point against IM-candidate Richard Bitoon in Board 1.

Lupian, a former national team member, paces the race for Board 1 honors with 5 points in 6 games.

Muntinlupa B, powered by NMs Yves Ranola and Rolly Martinez, shut out the NM Enrique Paciencia-led Tacloban City, 4-0, to tow seven other teams in a tie for 6th-13th places with similar 4 points each.

Also with 4 points are Muntinlupa A, Bacolod City, Dagupan City, Antipolo City, Calamba, Bocaue and Baguio City, which drew with Calamba though GM Eugene Torre opted to rest for the day.



## *Beach volley on at CCP grounds*

By June Navarro

THINGS are expected to heat up as 32 of the country's best beach volleyball players mix it up amid the scorching heat of the sun and sand today in the First Nestea Beach Volley National Open at the CCP grounds.

UST's Joan Botor, Gino Macailan of Letran and Elmer Valdez of Mapua, names synonymous to beach volley in recent years, will spearhead a host of formidable aspirants vying for the title.

Even men's indoor volley veterans Elvin Pabilomia and Parley Tupaz, both Southeast Asian Games campaigners, have joined the bandwagon to test their skill and mettle in the sand.

But focus will be on the distaff side as the women champions automatically snare slots in the national team, anticipated to don the national colors in the Second Nestea Beach Volley Asian Women's Championships slated March 30-April 1.

Highly touted to snag these slots are San Sebastian's Sheryl Tumayao and Jennifer Buhawe, last year's intercollegiate women's titlists and this year's semifinalists in Boracay Island set April 21-22.

Sanctioned by the Philippine Amateur Volleyball Association, the tournament will run until March 10.

The event makes up the second of a three-part beach volleyball tournament series, all held under the auspices of the Nestea Loves the Beach Program.

# Dindo Pumaren to Tanduay

GAMES TOMORROW *(Philsports)*
5:15 p.m. — Tanduay vs Ginebra
7:30 p.m. – Shell vs Red Bull

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DINDO Pumaren's wish to get traded to Tanduay Gold came true last night as Purefoods shipped him out in favor of a future trade pick.

Pumaren said he was relieved to hear the news which would team him up once again with brother Derrick, who is Tanduay's head coach.

"It has caused me great anxiety because I don't want to antagonize myself with Purefoods," Pumaren told the INQUIRER before their game with San Miguel last night. "But at the same time I was thinking of my future and I want a team where I can be comfortable with."

The deal would make Tanduay the owner of Pumaren's two remaining years with Purefoods plus an apprenticeship as Tanduay coach.

"It's what I and my wife have been praying for," said Pumaren, who bared that he wasn't joining Purefoods for the past three practices.

**In last night's first game, Alaska Milk leaned on two free throws by John Arigo with no time left to nip Mobiline, 73-71, at the Ynares Center.**

**Alaska improved to 4-4 while Mobiline dropped to 2-5.**

**San Miguel Beer pulled off a 90-84 overtime victory over Purefoods in the second game to take solo leadership with a 6-2 record. The Hotdogs fell to 3-5.**

"I just shoot around and run on my own while my teammates practice," said Pumaren. "But everything went well and I thank coach Eric (Altamirano) and my teammates for everything."

Altamirano said: "Everybody's happy now. I hope we can all work on our games and focus our energy in making the next round."

Pumaren said he was the one who asked Altamirano not to use him in the previous games which the coach obliged.

The 35-year-old Pumaren said he was also thinking of his future "that's why I chose a stint as Tanduay coach in the future."

## Bryant versus Carter

WHO'S better, Kobe Bryant or Vince Carter?

Today's "NBA on Viva TV" may provide some answers as Bryant's Los Angeles Lakers face Carter's Toronto Raptors at 5:30 p.m. on IBC-13.

Bryant, currently number two in the NBA in scoring (29.5 points/game), erupted for 40 points in LA's previous game against the Raptors, a 104-101 victory in overtime last Dec. 17. Carter had 31 points in that game, but only hit on 10 of 32 shots.

Carter was named the NBA Player of the Week on Monday. He averaged a league-high 31.8 points, 6.5 rebounds and 4.8 assists while shooting .495 (46-of-93) from the floor, including .440 (11-of-25) from three-point range in Toronto's four victories last week.

## Lakers win

SHAQUILLE O'Neal threw himself a birthday bash that upstaged Antawn Jamison's rematch with Kobe Bryant as the Los Angeles Lakers beat the Golden State Warriors, 97-85, in NBA action.

O'Neal had 26 points, 17 rebounds and a dominant defensive game on his 29th birthday.

***Complete results:*** Minnesota 95, Charlotte 89; New York 97, Indiana 83; Chicago 87, Cleveland 74; Phoenix 93, Denver 82; Sacramento 98, Toronto 91; San Antonio 101, Seattle 73; Vancouver 105, Portland 97; L.A. Lakers 97, Golden State 85.

*AP*

## PSC wants 5-percent share

IN A BID to reinforce its Southeast Asian Games budget, the Philippine Sports Commission will request Malacañang for the restoration of its five percent share from the Philippine Gaming Corporation's monthly gross earnings.

Commissioner Richie Garcia, head of the joint PSC-Philippine Olympic Committee SEAG Task Force for the PSC side, yesterday said the PSC is in the thick of preparing a position paper to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for its reinstatement.

"Its (five percent share) restoration will definitely help the PSC shoulder the expenses of the country's participation in the SEAG and eventually support future programs of the NSAs," said Garcia.

*June Navarro*

## Zapata elected president of golf seniors

HONORATO V. Zapata was unanimously elected president of the Philippine Seniors Golf Association, Founders Chapter for 2001-2003 recently at the Veterans Golf Course. He has led the Club since 1989. Other officers elected were Eufracio Santos (executive vice president), lawyer Ernesto Mendoza (director-rules), Col. Jose Victoria (director-treasurer), Emmanuel Paz (director-handicap), Wilfredo Santos (director-membership), lawyer Jesus Laxamana (director-legal), Bill Samson (director-auditor), Jose Pineda (director-tournament), Feliciano "Anong" Reyes (secretary-PRO).

# Elorde Awards slated March 25

FORMER World Boxing Council flyweight champion Malcolm Tuñacao, who until his loss recently was the country's only reigning world champion, heads a cast of champions who will be honored in the "Banquet of Champions" in the first Gabriel "Flash" Elorde Boxing Awards on March 25 at the Manila Hotel.

The Elorde Boxing Awards will be given by the Elorde family during the birth anniversary of the late world junior lightweight champion, who is enshrined in the International hall of Fame as one of the world's greatest boxers of all time.

Johnny Elorde, son of Da Flash, said the award will be an annual undertaking to honor the past year's world, international and Philippine title holders as well as the top referees, trainers/seconds, best fights and best knockouts.

It is the Philippine version of boxing's Hall of Fame.

The other Philippine champions:

Miniflyweight Ernesto Rubillar, lightflyweights Lolito Laroa (January to February), Eugene Gonzales (March to June) and Jovan Presbitero (July to December), Flyweights Rolando "Flash" Murillo (May to July) and Melvin Magramo (August to December), superflyweight Joel Avila, bantamweight Ricky Gayamo (January to September) and Abner Cordero (October to December). Superbantamweight Dino Olivetti, featherweight Baby Lorona Jr. superfeatherweight Randy Suico, lightweights Joselito Rivera (January to July) and Dennis Laurente (August to December), superlightweight Dindo Castanares (December), welterweight Rey Santillan and superwelterweight Jerry Balagbagan.

# La Salle Hall of Fame affair set

FORMER Philippine Sports Commission chair Philip 'Popoy' Juico and versatile athletes Reynaldo Bautista and Jose Mari Duarte have been nominated by the De La Salle Alumni Sports Foundation Inc. for inclusion in the Hall of Fame.

Another nominee, Davis Cup standout Macky Dominguez, is also expected to be installed during the De La Salle Alumni homecoming on Saturday at the De La Salle's Taft Ave. campus.

The theme for this year's celebrations is: TEN to the CenTENnial. Founded in 1911, De La Salle will turn 100 in 2011.

Organized by Class '76, headed by Terry Capistrano, this year's festivities kicked off with a Green and White Valentine Victory Ball at the Manila Polo Club on Feb. 17 and the "Golf for Green" tournament on March 5 at the Sta. Elena Golf Club.

Capistrano announced that all Lasallians are invited to visit the new multi-storey La Salle Sports Complex on Agno Street, which is accessible through Castro Street-Taft Ave. Shuttles will be provided between 2 p.m.-4 p.m. to bring alumni and friends to the sports complex. Registration starts at 4 p.m.

JUICO

DUARTE

BAUTISTA

This year's silver jubilee class aims to help DLSU establish an Alumni Hall of Fame room in the sports complex and to support the university's scholarship program. Juico spearheaded the preparation of the first ever Sectoral Plan for Philippine sports and was in the volleyball, track and field and swimming teams of La Salle in high school and college.

Bautista played for six years in the De La Salle junior and senior basketball squads, becoming team captain of both. He was also into athletics and softball.

Duarte was an outstanding football player and also figured well in volleyball and athletics. He became an outstanding coach upon retirement from active sports.

Dominguez was champion in both singles and doubles tennis and represented the Philippines in Davis Cup form 1974-76.

## SPORTS ON TV

COMPILED BY LORENZO MANGUIAT

**BASKETBALL:** US NCAA - AT&T Big East Tournament, First Round at 8 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 4 p.m., Quarterfinal #1 tomorrow at 1 a.m., Big 10 Tournament, First Round tomorrow at 5:30 a.m. on ESPN

NBA – Toronto Raptors vs LA Lakers at 5:30 p.m. on IBC 13

**GOLF:** PGA Genuity Championship, Final Round at 8 a.m. (r), Tour Highlights at 11:30 p.m. on Star Sports

**TENNIS:** Sybase Open, Semifinals at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

**TRACK AND FIELD:** IAAF Indoor Grand Prix at 6 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

**BILLIARDS:** 2000 Women's Tournament of Champions Finals at 6 p.m. (r) on ESPN

**WRESTLING:** WCW Nitro at 9:30 p.m. on Star Sports

**ICE SKATING:** ISU Grand Prix Final 2000, Highlights #3 at 10 a.m. on Star Sports

**SOCCER:** Women's College Soccer at 12 noon (r) on Star Sports

Football Focus at 7:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

***Schedules subject to change without prior notice.***

## Dance sport in Subic

IN LINE with the thrust to promote the sport in the grassroots, the Dance Sport Council of the Philippines, headed by indefatigable president Becky Garcia, will stage the 2nd National Quarterly Ranking and Alaxan Cup Competitio on Saturday, March 17, at the George Dewey Theater of scenic Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

This season-opening event is being held in cooperation with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority chaired by Felicito Payumo.

It is sponsored by the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Olympic Committee, Doctor Trusted Alaxan, Legenda Hotel and Winstar buses.

A dance sport workshop to be conducted by licensed coach Scott Todd will highlight the affair on March 15-16, also at the George Dewey Theater. Three foreign adjudicators have been invited while UK professional ballroom champions Mirko and Marika Selli will perform a demonstration number during the competition on March 17. For details, call Vikki at 635-0116 or Ruby at 752-0435 to 36 or visit the Dancesport Training Center at the Philsport Complex (formerly ULTRA) in Pasig City.

Wazzzzup?

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**On Target: SC didn't have a choice** A18

# METRO

Louie C. Camino, Editor

**Gov't not inclined to grant automatic water rate raise** A18

# Jinggoy faces criminal raps over ambulances

By Andrea Trinidad-Echavez

**THE Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office yesterday threatened to file criminal charges against San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, son of ousted President Joseph Estrada, if he continued to ignore demands to produce papers for the almost 200 ambulances he reportedly distributed to municipal mayors.**

In a news conference at the PCSO central office in Quezon City, PCSO chair Ma. Livia Singson-de Leon revealed that Malacañang, at the behest of then President Estrada, released 186 ambulances without proper documentation.

She said 121 ambulances were released to the League of Municipalities of the Philippines (LMP), which the younger Estrada heads, while 55 were distributed to various beneficiaries that included private foundations.

"We shall give all the recipients sufficient time to comply with the documentary requirements in connection with these PCSO-donated ambulances," De Leon said. "The deeds of donation and the certificates of acceptance must be duly accomplished by the recipients."

She said the PCSO, through its legal department, had forwarded its demand letter to Mayor Estrada's LMP office yesterday.

JINGGOY

The letter, signed by PCSO legal counsel Cirilo Avila, warned the San Juan mayor to submit the documents within the next 10 days or he would face charges.

Last year, the Estradas came under fire after former PCSO board member Sr. Christine Tan accused them of pressuring the charity institution to release to them hundreds of millions of pesos in funds for the benefit of institutions handpicked by the Estradas themselves.

Tan said a total of P430,279,581 in PCSO funds was diverted to the Office of the President, the Office of the First Lady, and the LMP, to the detriment of the PCSO which was left with only P65,364,000 to spend for its usual charitable beneficiaries, including hospitals and orphanages.

Then opposition lawmakers accused the former first family of dangling PSCO-funded projects to further the political ambitions of Mayor Estrada, who had initially wanted to run for a Senate seat until his father was forced out of power in a popular revolt in January.

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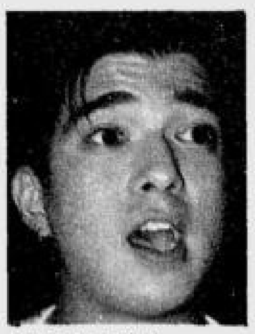
MAGALONA

## Francis M daughter wins round vs school

By Leah Salterio

RAPPER and TV host Francis Magalona and his daughter Maxene have won the first round of their fight against her school, the Assumption Antipolo, which earlier expelled the girl for appearing in a TV commercial.

Antipolo City Regional Trial Court Executive Judge Mauricio Rivera yesterday rejected the school's motion to dismiss.

Maxene, a 14-year-old high school freshman at Assumption Antipolo, earlier filed a civil case against her school for expelling her without due process after she made a sanitary napkin commercial.

Francis and the girl's mother, Pia Arroyo, assisted her in filing the case.

After the TV commercial was aired in February, an Assumption teacher reportedly told Maxene when she came to school the next day, "Why are you still here? Just go home. You are no longer welcome to the school because you did that TV commercial."

Assumption Antipolo countered that the case filed by Maxene should be dismissed for lack of jurisdiction. The school officials said the girl's parents failed to raise the matter with the school principal, then the division superintendent, the regional director of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) and finally the Education secretary, before finally bringing it to court.

Judge Rivera yesterday issued the order denying the school's motion to dismiss the case.

"Our primary concern is the welfare of the minor-plaintiff, whose right to proper education may be in

FRANCIS/A19

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*Approved by DTI-NCR. Per DTI-NCR Permit no. 1335 Series of 2000.

# Japanese executive kills self

By Alcuin Papa

DEPRESSED over his life and marriage, a Japanese shot himself while drinking with a friend in Taguig.

Mitsuo Tsutumi, 75, consultant of Well Drilling Company and a resident of Bagsakan Avenue corner Mango Road, Agro-Industrial Commercial Estate, FTI Complex in Western Bicutan, Taguig, shot himself in the head with a .22 caliber pistol about 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday.

Tsutumi's drinking companion, Angelo Cachero, 22, told police he witnessed the suicide, which took place in the house of the Japanese.

He told police that Tsutumi and himself started drinking about 7 p.m. inside Tsutumi's room.

While they were drinking, Cachero said Tsutumi started talking about his problems, particularly his troubled marriage. He confided to Cachero that his wife, who is in Japan, had rejected plans for their divorce.

Cachero said Tsutumi became upset, angrily pulled out a .22 Ruger pistol and began shooting at the walls and other parts of his room.

He said Tsutumi then gave his gun to Cachero and asked him to shoot him. But Tsutumi calmed down, Cachero said, and they resumed their drinking. But Tsutumi suddenly shot himself in the head, Cachero said.

He said he tried to bring Tsutumi to a hospital but could not lift him. He then asked help from FTI security guards.

Police found at the scene eight empty .22 shells.

Rolando Gorospe, president of Tsutumi's company, said that the Japanese had also talked to him about his problems.

Gorospe said Tsutumi had told him his wife refused to sign their divorce papers, and this made the Japanese depressed, Gorospe said.

But police are still investigating the case and would subject Cachero to paraffin tests to determine if he fired the gun.

# Gov't not inclined to grant automatic water rate raise

THE PRICE of water would go sky-high if the government would approve the petitions for Accelerated and Automatic Currency Adjustment (auto-Cera) filed by the Lopez-owned Maynilad Water Services Inc. (MWSI) and the Ayala-owned Manila Water.

But the government is not inclined to grant the petition for the implementation of the auto-Cera, which will allow the water firms to raise rates according to desired price levels.

In yesterday's Cabinet meeting where Maynilad's petition was discussed, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo directed the Department of Finance and the Metropolitan Waterways and Sewerage System (MWSS) to meet with the concessionaire to look for ways other than the auto-Cera to recoup Maynilad's reported P2.3 billion losses in foreign exchange.

Aside from the auto-Cera, the Cabinet noted that there were still other options to help the Lopez-owned water-firm recover financial losses due to foreign exchange concessions.

"I am sure there will be a solution other than the auto-Cera," said Ms Macapagal, who stressed the need for a solution that would be beneficial and acceptable to the government, the consumers and the concessionaire.

One option was the tapping of various models of bridge financing such as the Maynilad shareholders themselves, a government guarantee to help secure financing from the ADB-led consortium or a commercial loan from one of the government financial institutions.

Ms Macapagal and the Cabinet also discussed the possibility of subjecting the West Zone service concession to a re-bidding process if the MWSS and Maynilad would not be able to come up with any agreement.

Maynilad has earlier said it is ready to return its concession to the MWSS if the government would not allow the auto-Cera.

Carrying placards that said "auto-Cera equals auto-*daya*," about 100 protesters belonging to the left-leaning party-list group Sanlakas and the Freedom from Debt Coalition on Tuesday picketed the offices of MWSI and Manila Waters in Balara, Quezon City.

The protesters demanded from the Metro Manila Water Sewerage System (MWSS) not to approve the auto-Cera.

FDC and Sanlakas members said they were worried since the two firms are controlled by powerful business interests with close ties to the Arroyo administration.

Approval of the auto-Cera would revise the concession agreement made by the MWSI, MWCI and the MWSS in 1997 when the MWSS was privatized.

Under the present concession agreement, the two firms are allowed to charge consumers P1 per cubic meter of water consumed. They are also allowed to adjust their tariffs if there is a change in currency exchange through the Extraordinary Price Adjustment or EPA.

But both the MWSI and the MWCI had asked the Department of Finance to revise the 1997 concession agreement to allow them to automatically adjust their tariffs and recover their investments in a much shorter period of time.

The water companies want the contract revised to amass instant profit and not just recover loses, according to Sanlakas president Wilson Fortaleza.

Under the 1997 Concession Agreement, the concessionaires are not allowed to raise their tariffs within five years. They are also allowed to recover their investments for up to 22 years.

But under the proposed auto-Cera, the MWSI and MWCI would be able to lift the ban on rate increase and shorten the recovery period to two years, Fortaleza said.

"In effect, it is the people who will shoulder the cost of all these unreasonable price adjustments."

According to Fortaleza, this is how auto-Cera would raise the cost of water: A current MWSI customer consuming an average of 30 cubic-meter of water a month pays from P118.90 to P171.95. He would have to pay between P305.48 and P355.76 if the proposed adjustments were approved.

Sanlakas also demanded for a review of the MWSS privatization scheme.

"Worse, there are no public hearings about these proposed changes. Everyone would be affected but the issue is not being talked about," Fortaleza said. ***With reports by Andrea Trinidad-Echavez and Philip C. Tubeza***

# SC didn't have a choice

ON TARGET

*Ramon Tulfo*

THE Supreme Court justices allegedly didn't have a choice but to vote 13-0 declaring President Macapagal the legal president.

If they ruled otherwise, Ms Macapagal could have declared a revolutionary government like what Corazon Aquino did when she took over from Ferdinand Marcos.

Ms Aquino dismissed most members of the high court at that time and retained only one or two justices.

***

**If Ms Macapagal declared a revolutionary government she would have been justified in abolishing the present Supreme Court. She would then most probably have re-appointed Chief Justice Hilario Davide.**

**With the Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police on her side, she could have easily declared a revolutionary government.**

**The high court was just being practical in ruling in favor of Ms Macapagal; they didn't want to lose their jobs.**

***

Many legal minds I've talked believe that President Estrada was allegedly deposed illegally and unconstitutionally.

But what the heck! *Wala namang kuwentang presidente si* Erap. He was supposedly the most corrupt, inept and dullest president this country ever had. He was said not to have been concerned about the people's welfare; all he allegedly cared about was to amass wealth and women.

Chief Justice Davide, quoting a legal maxim, hit the nail right in the head when he said: "The people's welfare is the supreme law."

***

**Now that the President has chosen Lt. Gen. Diomedio Villanueva as the successor to Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes, the intramurals within the AFP high command will cease.**

**The mudslinging among the candidates for AFP chief of staff had caused many subordinate officers and enlisted personnel to lose respect for their generals. "How can you respect generals who don't act like gentlemen?" said an Army captain.**

**Let's hope the President made the right choice in Villanueva.**

***

The first thing Villanueva should do when he assumes the AFP"s highest post is to relieve all the key officers at the Logistics Command (Logcom).

The present crop of officers at Logcom, which supplies weapons and other battle equipment to soldiers in the field, is allegedly linked to procurement irregularities.

Replacing key Logcom officers will squelch rumors that Villanueva was bribed by allegedly corrupt Logcom officers so they will retain their posts when he takes over the AFP chief of staff.

***

**Here's a letter I received from Leon J. Omoso, a Zamboanga City newsman, concerning an item about General Villanueva that appeared in this corner:**

**"In (this column) of March 01, 2001, you described General Diomedio Villanueva as a 'heavy drinker.'**

**"I decided to write you because as a media man myself, I used to cover some of the official activities of Lt. Gen. Diomedio Villanueva when he was assigned in our area as Southcom commander.**

**"In fairness to General Villanueva, I don't remember in so many social functions we attended together that he drunk heavily and that his drinking affected his behavior and decision-making as what you said in your 'On Target' column.**

**"The fact is General Villanueva is more of a social drinker than a heavy drinker.**

**"And during his stay as Southcom commander, we never heard of any anomalous transactions made by him or his office contrary to your statement that the General was reported to have been linked to irregular money transactions when he was still commander of the Southern Command."**

**Perhaps, Leon, you didn't dig deep enough.**

***

The Commission on Elections should consider President Macapagal's call to allow some four million youths to take part in the national elections in May.

Many 18-year-olds, who comprise 11 percent of the 40 million electorate, had neglected to register for this year's elections. They either forgot about their right to vote or were not informed about it by their elders.

These young men and women will make a big difference in the May elections because they are well-informed on current issues.

***

**For her own safety, Zamboanga City Customs Collector Lourdes Mangawang should be transferred to other ports.**

**The only thing that keeps her alive is probably her being a woman.**

**My sources say Mangawang, a diminutive woman, is very abusive. She carries a gun, which she has used several times in threatening some people who transacted business in her office. The pistol-packing Mama has been the subject of complaints from many Zamboangueños.**

**Perhaps Mangawang has forgotten that one of her predecessors at the Zamboanga customs port was murdered.**

***

I am very embarrassed by a booboo I made last Tuesday in this corner. I said that among opposition senatorial bets who are most likely to win, quoting political analysts, was Blas Ople. Ople is not running.

I meant Orly Mercado, a former newsman. Ople is also a former newsman. That was the reason for the mistake—interchanging Ople and Mercado. My apologies to Orly.

Deadline pressure was responsible for that stupid mistake. I'll be very careful next time.

# Pasig grain avalanche injures 6

SIX men were buried under tons of hardened wheat grain while they were cleaning a silo in a grain milling company in Pasig City yesterday.

Supt. John Sosito, Pasig City police chief, said Renato Dela Rosa of Napindan, Taguig, suffered the most injuries and is still confined at the Rizal Medical Center.

Others injured were Edgar Agosto, 20, and Jerico Babadilla, 21, both of Mandaluyong City; Teddy Aceras, 20; Percival Cruz, 24; and Arnel Maigating, 23, all of Pasig City.

Dr. Rodel Torrios said the victims, except for De la Rosa, experienced mild shock. Doctors later gave them a good bill of health and released them from the hospital.

But victim De la Rosa had to be put under observation after he complained of pain on the arms, chest and other parts of the body.

Supt. Sosito said the six men were removing the plaque-like hardened grain stuck on the walls of a silo bin at the Continental Milling Corporation on Shaw Blvd. Pasig City at around 9:30 a.m. *Agnes E. Donato*

# 11 deported

THEY looked clean and decent. But their missing pinky fingers and tattoos gave them away.

Immigration authorities yesterday barred 11 Japanese from entering Manila on suspicion that they were members of the Yakuza criminal syndicate.

The Japanese, who arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at about 2 p.m. aboard Japan Airlines, were immediately deported on the airline's return flight to Narita.

The Japanese were rounded up while queuing behind the immigration arrival counter. When profiled by immigration officers, they had missing pinky fingers and had tattoos all over their bodies—marks of a Yakuza member. *TJ Burgonio*

ROGER MARGALLO

**BAD COWS**

While the "mad cow" controversy continues to scare consumers away from beef products, these cows quietly graze in a field in Molino, Bacoor in Cavite. The same field, however, is also being used as a garbage dump and residents of nearby villages reportedly have been complaining.

## THE DAILY GOSPEL

**Thursday, March 8, 2001**
**1st Week of Lent**

**1st Reading:** **Es C: 12, 14-16, 23-25**
**Gospel:** **Mt 7:7-12**

Jesus said to his disciples, "Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened. For everyone who asks, receives; whoever seeks, finds; and the door will be opened to him who knocks. Would any of you give a stone to your son when he asks for bread? Or give him a snake, when he asks for a fish? As bad as you are, you know how to give good things to your children. How much more, then, will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

So, do to others whatever you would that others do to you: there you have the Law and the Prophets."

**Commentary:**

*In God we live, move and have our being. Yet our day-to-day living frequently belies this fact. That is why Lent instills in us greater trust and love for God. We need to constantly discover God as the loving Parent, whose mind for us is nothing but our wellbeing. Only with such discovery can we follow the Golden Rule. For, it is God's Spirit in us who helps us to do this: to know what is right and be eager to do it.*

***Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City; Tel.: 921-3984; Fax: 921-7429; E-mail: claret@cn1.net; Websites: http://www.bible.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) & http://missionaries.claret.org (Claretians in the Philippines)***

## SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

**CIVIL LAW (OBLIGATIONS AND CONTRACTS)—Indivisible obligation**—An obligation is indivisible when it cannot be validly performed in parts, whatever may be the nature of the thing which is the object thereof. The indivisibility refers to the prestation and not to the object thereof. In the present case, the Deed of Sale supposedly conveyed the six lots to petitioner. The obligation is clearly indivisible because the performance of the contract cannot be done in parts, otherwise the value of what is transferred is diminished. Petitioners are therefore mistaken in basing the indivisibility of a contract on the number of obligors. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Mendoza, Second Division, Nazareno v. Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 138842, October 18, 2000]

Digest by R.B. Vera

# 'PAOCTF agent' takes phone for 'bug study'

SALESMAN Renato Reyes on Monday lost his cellular phone to a bogus agent of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF).

Reyes, 26, employee of Wheeler's Inc. and resident of Bronze Street, Tugatog, Malabon, said he was standing outside his office on E. Rodriguez Avenue with his cellular phone on Saturday when a man came up to him and introduced himself as Noel of the PAOCTF, SPO4 Edmund Senido said.

The "agent" told Reyes his superiors had ordered him to study how to bug a Nokia 5110 phone and he asked the victim if he could have Reyes' phone, police said.

The suspect, described to be in his 30s, around 6 feet tall, muscular, and with a pistol tucked in his waist, even offered a brand-new Nokia 3310 in exchange for Reyes' 5110 phone plus P1,000, police said.

Reyes told police he agreed to the exchange since his own 5110 costs around P5,000, while a brand-new 3310 is worth more than P7,000.

Reyes thought even if he were to add P1,000, he would still have a brand-new cellular phone and save another P1,000, Senido said.

Reyes said the agent told him he would be back Monday morning to get the phone and the money.

The suspect went back and fetched Reyes from his office around 10 a.m., and rode a taxi to a slum area on P. Manalo Street, Barangay Immaculate Concepcion, Quezon City.

Once there, the suspect told Reyes to stay at a certain spot while he would go get the phone at a PAOCTF safehouse nearby, Senido said.

Reyes waited for the suspect to return. After an hour, he realized he had been had.

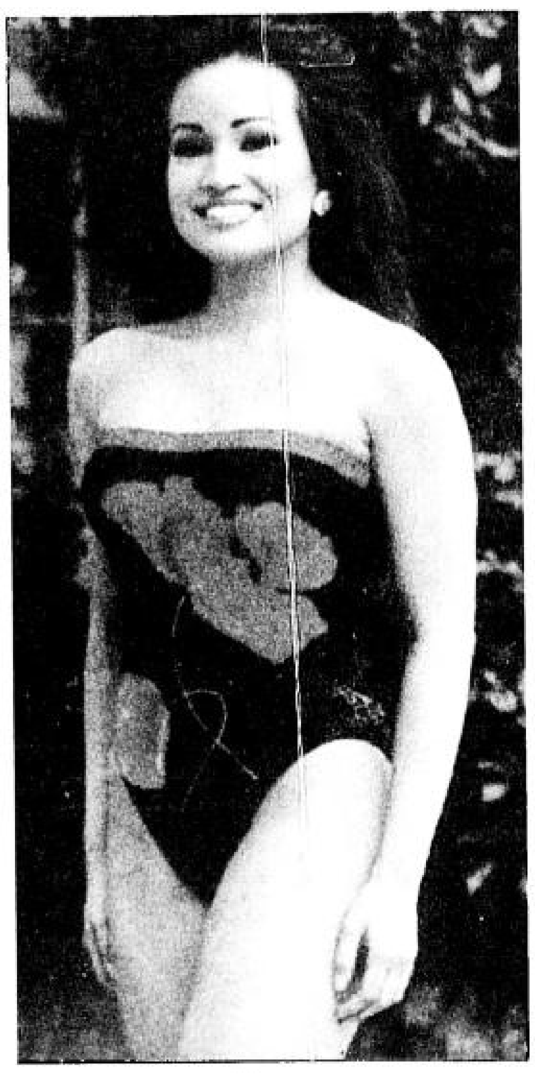
Reyes immediately went to the Kamuning police station to report the incident.

*Philip C. Tubeza*

**WHO'LL BE THE THREE FAIREST OF 'EM ALL?**

A total of 26 young women, including the four at right, are vying for the titles Bb. Pilipinas Universe, Bb. Pilipinas International and Bb. Pilipinas World. There will also be special awards like Miss Photogenic, Miss Talent, Miss Friendship, Best in Swimsuit and Best in Long Gown. The winners will be known on Saturday as the pageant winds up at the Araneta Coliseum.

MARICARL TOLOSA



CRISTINA FANDINO

JENIE MANUEL

MICHELLE REYES

# 'Dacer nephew' nabbed for Ermita shop theft

By Jerome Aning

A YOUNG man who claimed to be a nephew of missing public relations practitioner Salvador "Bubby" Dacer was arrested Tuesday for allegedly masterminding the theft of P220,000 cash from a refreshments store in Ermita, Manila.

Joonelito Dacer, 21, a resident of San Isidro Village, Marikina City, was identified by his girlfriend Teresa Geranga, 20, as her accomplice in stealing the earnings of Balis & Drinks Merchandising on Escoda Street in Ermita.

Insp. Eduardo Cruz, head of the Western Police District theft and rubbery section, said Geranga, a cashier at Balis & Drinks, was arrested Tuesday morning on the complaint of store operator Lazaro de Leon.

De Leon, 43, said Geranga pocketed P220,000 of the store's earnings by misrepresent the sales for the past few weeks. But the cashier said it was Dacer who prodded her to do the theft and then to give the stolen money to him.

Inspector Cruz convinced Geranga to call up Dacer on his cell phone and to tell him she would give him more money. Geranga agree to meet Dacer around 5 p.m. at the Masagana Supermarket on Taft Avenue.

Plainclothes policemen arrested Dacer as soon as he arrived. The young lovers are detained at the Western Police District Integrated Jail.

## ASISTIO ACCUSES MALONZO

# 'Dirty tricks!'

By Christian V. Esguerra

CALOOCAN Rep. Luis ".Baby" Asistio has accused his archrival in the mayoral race, Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo, of employing dirty tricks to discredit him in the May elections.

Asistio, whom Malonzo called a "gangster" and "criminal," claimed the mayor has a "dirty tricks" department at work in the city.

Allan Encarnacion, head of Asistio's media affairs bureau, provided a twist to the Malonzo-Asistio feud when he claimed that a friend of Malonzo is planning to bail out the lawmaker's son, Pachot, whom the lawmaker ordered arrested last week on robbery and drug charges.

"The congressman wants to keep his son in jail," Encarnacion said. But Malonzo wants to bail Pachot out so he could use the son "to destroy Baby's reputation."

Encarnacion said Malonzo was also behind the distribution of hundreds of anti-Asistio posters detailing the drug buy-bust operation involving another son, Luisito "Peting" Asistio.

"Malonzo's dirty tricks department is now at work," Encarnacion told the INQUIRER. "He's insecure because he knows Baby is serious with his job and he's unbeatable."

But Malonzo denied he was behind the alleged hate campaign. He said the posters were the handiwork of anti-drug groups and concerned citizens.

"There's no need to destroy (Asistio's) image since it has long been destroyed," Malonzo said. "Actually, you can't call the posters dirty tricks because what they're saying is true. Asistio should just jail his sons or have them executed if need be."

The mayor added he need not employ dirty tricks on Asistio since his personal surveys showed he would win a third and final term over his fierce rival with a 68-32 landslide.

The controversial poster is a reprint of a tabloid's front page story, headlined "Congressman Asistio's son busted in shabu session."

According to that story, "Peting" Asistio was arrested and shot in a drug raid at his Dagat-Dagatan apartment in May last year.

The National Bureau of Investigation later ruled the incident was a rubout attempt.

Hundreds of posters lined the entire stretch of the Light Rail Transit in Caloocan.

"Malonzo should hit Baby, not his sons," Encarnacion said. "They (the sons) are not the candidates. He is quite insecure of Baby."

# Manila official says market modernization good for city

A MANILA city hall official yesterday assured vendors at the Arranque Market on Claro M. Recto Avenue that they would not be displaced when the city government begins to modernize the facility.

City Administrator Maria Lourdes "Bonjay" Isip said the modernization plan, which would be under a long-term lease scheme at no cost to government, would benefit not only legitimate stallholders but city residents as well.

"(The plan) would definitely be advantageous to the city government," Isip said. "We would also like to assure legitimate stallholders that they would not be displaced and would benefit from this move because we would make the new facility more attractive to market-goers," with the end-result of increasing sales for vendors.

Under the plan, the modernized market would have a spacious area with improved facilities such as lighting, electrical and water connection.

There will also be a three-level parking area in the new facility for the added comfort of market goers as well as to minimize traffic in the area.

Isip denied there had been irregularities in the bidding process and the ratification of contract with the winning bidder.

"The contract with the winning bidder was transmitted to the City Council, which ratified it in open session," Isip said. "Every step of the process was transparent and in accordance with prescribed procedures."

She cautioned critics of the Arranque Market modernization plan to check their facts before hurling "baseless accusations," even as she noted the city government was not even given a chance to air its side.

"It's really unfair to the Mayor, city officials and members of the City Council because they were subjected to such unfounded and baseless accusations," Isip said.

# Aga's name crops up in Munti politics

By Alcuin Papa

IS movie actor Aga Muhlach running; for Muntinlupa City mayor?

Talk is rife in the city that Muhlach would make a last-minute entry into the city's political arena since the candidacy of the main opponent of incumbent Mayor Jaime Fresnedi is said to be in peril.

But the movie star's manager, Ethel Ramos, denied that he was going to run for mayor.

"That is not true," said Ramos. "He has no more plans to run."

Fresnedi, who is running for reelection, is set to face newcomer Beth Masangkay of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino. Masangkay is reportedly a sister of Cynthia Villar, wife of senatorial candidate Manny Villar.

Masangkay's candidacy is still a question mark. She flew to the United States for treatment of a respiratory problem shortly after filing her certificate of candidacy.

Up to now, Masangkay has not been able to campaign, leaving her running mate, Vic Chua, to fend for himself on the campaign trail.

Thus, talk said Muhlach would take Masangkay's place as the LDP candidate for mayor. The actor is a resident of posh Ayala-Alabang Village.

"Aga has long wanted to enter politics in the city," a city hall insider said. "In fact, he did some campaign rounds before but he stopped."

The source said the slot for the candidate for vice mayor was offered to Muhlach but the actor rejected it. "He was politically ambitious at that time and wanted to run for mayor," the source said. "At that time, a movie actor was still president and a lot of movie actors wanted to run for public office."

Muhlach's manager said the actor was "preoccupied" with preparations for his wedding to actress and former beauty queen Charlene Gonzales in Baguio on May 28.

"He is focused on the wedding," Ramos stressed. "Politics is definitely not on his mind."

## Rerouting

TRAFFIC in Mandaluyong City will be rerouted today for the grand proclamation of the People Power Coalition candidates.

A portion of Boni Avenue will be closed from 7 a.m. to 12 midnight. The rerouting will be at the intersection of San Joaquin Street and Boni Avenue.

East-bound motorists coming from Kalentong and going to Edsa should turn right on San Rafael Street, left on San Pedro Street, left again on Sto. Rosario Street, then right to get back on Boni Avenue at Maysilo Circle.

Those coming from Edsa and going to Kalentong or to the west should take a right turn on Martinez Street, then left on San Rafael Street, and right on Boni Avenue again.

# Gatchalian: I'm not running

By Armand N. Nocum

WILLIAM GATCHALIAN, a close friend of ousted President Estrada, has asked reelectionist Rep. Magtanggol "Magi" Gunigundo Jr. not to drag his name into the political contest in Valenzuela.

Gatchalian said it is his son, Sherwin Gatchalian, who is running for Congress against Gunigundo's father, Magtanggol Gunigundo, former chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

The senior Gunigundo is contesting the seat for Valenzuela's first district while his son Magi is eyeing the second district.

"Why pick on me when I am not the one running for Congress," Gatchalian said before he handed the phone to Sherwin.

The young Gatchalian dared Magi Gunigundo to take issue with him, not with his father.

"I am my own man," Sherwin said. "I am not privy to my father's business dealings."

Gunigundo claimed that Sherwin was running to allegedly gain political clout "so (the Gatchalian) family could strike a 'compromise' with the new government."

The "compromise" Gunigundo referred to was meant for William Gatchalian who, in the impeachment trial, was said to have received a loan from Estrada through the controversial Jose Velarde account.

The young Gatchalian also denied he received P50 million in campaign funds from Estrada.

"It is unfair for him to charge me for all these things," Sherwin said. "Why does he not take issue with me. I am 27 years old. I'm an adult. I'm not under the wings of my father. We're not the same persons."

Sherwin also resented Gunigundo's charges that he does not have the "academic background to be a lawmaker."

"Who is he to judge a person's intellectual competence?" asked Gatchalian, who is running under the National Peoples' Coalition.

Gatchalian sent the INQUIRER a copy of his bio-data, showing him to be a graduate of Boston University with a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration and having taken business and language courses in various schools in Europe and Beijing.

Gatchalian was president and chief executive officer of the Plastic City Corp. and vice chair of Air Philippines Corp. before he filed his candidacy.

Gatchalian promised to use his business experience to raise Valenzuela from its status as a "non-progressive city."

**THE FUGITIVE** RANDY HORMILLOSA

Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo presents to media people American Thomas Scott Crossland, who is wanted in his country for producing substances used in the manufacture of shabu.

# Caloocan delivery man robbed of P200,000

By Christian V. Esguerra

A DELIVERY man on Monday lost some P200,000 to two robbers in a bold daylight heist in Caloocan City.

Emerson Quetulio, 31, of Concepcion Street, Victory Heights, Novaliches, Quezon City, and employee of MNL Forwarders door-to-door services, was robbed in front of dumbfounded residents of Gremville Subdivision, Caloocan, said PO3 Leonilo Padulaga of the Caloocan Police Station 1.

Police said the victim was about to hand over P28,000 in cash to Rodalyn Tayo, of Gemini Street, Gremville, when the suspects wearing bullcaps, white shirts, and denim pants robbed him at gunpoint about noon Monday.

The suspects were on a gray Ninja motorcycle when they stopped in front of the victim, pulled out .45-caliber pistols and ordered Quetulio to hand over the money, PO3 Padulaga said.

But the victim resisted and he and the suspects had a tug-of-war over the bag, police said.

By then, Tayo's neighbors came out of their houses to check out the commotion and saw the robbers overpower Quetulio, Padulaga said.

The suspects then sped off toward Valenzuela City with the bag containing P200,000 in cash deliveries, Padulaga added.

Police said none of the witnesses were able to take down the license number of the suspects' motorcycle.

Calooocan and Valenzuela police are now tracking down the suspects.

*Christian V. Esguerra*

# Francis M daughter wins...

(From page A17)

fringed," the judge said in his order.

"An expulsion or exclusion at this point, when the school year is almost over, would cause greater damage to the plaintiff's studies, as opposed to the consequences that may be suffered therefrom by the defendants," the judge said.

Rivera also ordered the school officials to refrain from imposing the penalty of expulsion or exclusion on Maxene.

The Magalonas are represented by lawyers Niasio Conti and Sabino Padilla Jr.

Assumption Antipolo is represented by Sr. Carla Teresa and administrative coordinator Norma Aguilos.

## SM CINEMA GUIDE

SM Dial-A-Movie • Tel. 633-9999

**NOW SHOWING**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **SM CITY BACOOR** | | **4173868** |
| 1 | DOLBY SURROUND | CAST AWAY |
| 2 | DOLBY SURROUND | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| 3 | DOLBY DIGITAL | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 4 | DOLBY SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 5 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | DRACULA 2000 |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | LIVE SHOW |
| 7 | DOLBY SURROUND | HANNIBAL |
| 8 | DOLBY SURROUND | HOSTAGE |
| **SM CENTERPOINT** | | **7149522 • 7161416** |
| 1 | DOLBY SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | DOLBY SURROUND | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 | DTS | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 4 | DOLBY SURROUND | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| 5 | DOLBY DIGITAL | HANNIBAL |
| 6 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | CAST AWAY |
| 7 | DOLBY SURROUND | DRACULA 2000 |
| 8 | DOLBY SURROUND | FAMILY MAN |
| 9 | DOLBY SURROUND | HOSTAGE |
| 10 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| **SM CITY FAIRVIEW** | | **9350749** |
| 1 | DOLBY SURROUND | OBJECT OF OBSESSION |
| 2 | DOLBY SURROUND | DEMON GATE |
| 3 | DOLBY SURROUND | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| 4 | DOLBY DIGITAL | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 5 | DOLBY SURROUND | LIVE SHOW |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 7 | DOLBY DIGITAL | HANNIBAL |
| 8 | DOLBY SURROUND | DRACULA 2000 |
| 9 | DOLBY SURROUND | HOSTAGE |
| 10 | DOLBY SURROUND | CAST AWAY |
| 11 | DOLBY SURROUND | WOMAN ON TOP |
| 12 | DOLBY SURROUND | TUHOG |
| **SM CITY MANILA** | | **5239240** |
| 1 | DOLBY DIGITAL | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 2 | DOLBY DIGITAL | HANNIBAL |
| 3 | DOLBY SURROUND | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| 4 | DOLBY SURROUND | DRACULA 2000 |
| 5 | DOLBY DIGITAL | PAY IT FORWARD |
| 6 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | CAST AWAY |
| 7 | DOLBY SURROUND | WOMAN ON TOP |
| 8 | DOLBY SURROUND | OBJECT OF OBSESSION |
| 9 | DOLBY SURROUND | HOSTAGE |
| 10 | DOLBY SURROUND | FAMILY MAN |
| 11 | DOLBY SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 12 | DOLBY SURROUND | LIVE SHOW |
| **GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR** | | **8820950** |
| 1 | ULTRA SURROUND | LIVE SHOW |
| 2 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | DRACULA 2000 |
| 3 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| **SM MEGAMALL** | | **6331901 • 6329401** |
| 1 | DOLBY DIGITAL | HANNIBAL |
| 2 | DOLBY SURROUND | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| 3 | DOLBY DIGITAL | DRACULA 2000 |
| 4 | DTS | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 5 | DOLBY SURROUND | HOSTAGE |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | LIVE SHOW |
| 7 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| 8 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| 9 | DOLBY SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| 10 | DOLBY SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| 11 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| 12 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| **SM CITY NORTH EDSA** | | **9295452** |
| 1 | DOLBY SURROUND | HOSTAGE |
| 2 | DOLBY SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 3 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | CAST AWAY |
| 4 | DOLBY SURROUND | LIVE SHOW |
| 5 | DOLBY SURROUND | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| 7 | DTS | HANNIBAL |
| 8 | DOLBY DIGITAL | DRACULA 2000 |
| 9 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | OBJECT OF OBSESSION |
| 10 | DOLBY SURROUND | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| 11 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | TUHOG |
| 12 | DOLBY SURROUND | FAMILY MAN |
| **SM SOUTHMALL** | | **8066088 • 8066762** |
| 1 | ULTRA SURROUND | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| 2 | ULTRA SURROUND | HANNIBAL |
| 3 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 4 | ULTRA SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 5 | ULTRA SURROUND | OBJECT OF OBSESSION |
| 6 | ULTRA SURROUND | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| 7 | ULTRA SURROUND | LIVE SHOW |
| 8 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | DRACULA 2000 |
| 9 | ULTRA SURROUND | CAST AWAY |
| 10 | ULTRA SURROUND | HOSTAGE |
| **TUTUBAN CENTER** | | **2514302** |
| 1 | ULTRA SURROUND | DRACULA 2000 |
| 2 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | HOSTAGE |
| 3 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 4 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | LIVE SHOW |
| **SM CEBU** | | **2313876** |
| 1 | DOLBY SURROUND | PAY IT FORWARD |
| 2 | ULTRA SURROUND | WHAT WOMEN WANT |
| 3 | ULTRA SURROUND | NURSE BETTY |
| 4 | ULTRA SURROUND | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| 5 | ULTRA SURROUND | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| 6 | ULTRA SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 7 | DOLBY SURROUND | HANNIBAL |
| **SM ILOILO** | | **3209422** |
| 1 | ULTRA SURROUND | WOMAN ON TOP |
| 2 | ULTRA SURROUND | WHAT WOMEN WANT |
| 3 | ULTRA SURROUND | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| 4 | ULTRA SURROUND | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| 5 | ULTRA SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 6 | ULTRA SURROUND | PROOF OF LIFE |
| 7 | ULTRA SURROUND | 102 DALMATIANS |
| 8 | ULTRA SURROUND | CAST AWAY |
| **SM PAMPANGA** | | **7128015** |
| 1 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | HANNIBAL |
| 2 | DOLBY DIGITAL EX | DRACULA 2000 |
| 3 | DOLBY SURROUND | WOMAN ON TOP |
| 4 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | HOSTAGE |
| 5 | SYNTHESIZED SURROUND | LIVE SHOW |
| 6 | DOLBY SURROUND | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |

Movies are subject to change without prior notice.

## AYALA CINEMAS

NOW SHOWING

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reserve seats through www.sureseats.com

**GLORIETTA 1** formerly QUAD

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | LIVE SHOW |
| 2 | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 3 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 4 | HOSTAGE |

All Digital Sounds

**GLORIETTA 4**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | ALMOST FAMOUS<br>in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | DRACULA 2000<br>in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | MS. CONGENIALITY THX<br>in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | INNOCENCE (Phil. Premiere)<br>in DTS DIGITAL SOUND<br>Art Film |
| 5 | FAMILY MAN<br>in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 6 | HANNIBAL<br>in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 7 | CAST AWAY<br>in DTS DIGITAL SOUND |

**GREENBELT**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | LIVE SHOW<br>in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | MS. CONGENIALITY<br>in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | HANNIBAL<br>in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | MARCH 16,17,23,24<br>GARY V. BY REQUEST 2<br>Onstage |

**ALABANG TOWN CENTER**

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | MS. CONGENIALITY THX<br>in DSD/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 2 | HANNIBAL<br>in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND |
| 3 | DRACULA 2000<br>in DTS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 4 | ALMOST FAMOUS<br>in DTS DIGITAL SOUND |
| 5 | LIVE SHOW<br>in DTS DIGITAL SOUND |

## MMTA

METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

## MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

**Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA**
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (SDS) | DRACULA 2000 |
| 2 (SDDS) | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| 3 (DTS) | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 4 GOLD (DTS) | HANNIBAL |
| 5 GOLD (DOLBY) | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 6 GOLD (SDDS) | WOMAN ON TOP |
| 7 GOLD (DOLBY) | CAST AWAY |
| 8 [illegible] | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 9 [illegible] | HOSTAGE |
| 10 [illegible] | LIVE SHOW |

**Pearl Plaza Cinemas**
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | BLONDIE |
| 3 (DTS) | |
| 4 | |
| 5 | |
| 6 (DTS) | |
| Golden Pearl THX | |

**Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3**
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 2 (DTS) | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 3 | LIVE SHOW |

**Masagana CINEMA 1-2 & 3**
(Pasay) tel 831.6603

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | DRACULA 2000 |
| 3 | LIVE SHOW |

**starmall Movies**
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | HOSTAGE |
| 3 | LIVE SHOW |
| 4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 5 | DRACULA 2000 |

**Metropolis**
(Alabang) tel 543.4001

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | RESERVE |
| 3 | HOSTAGE |
| 4 | LIVE SHOW |
| 5 | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 6 | HANNIBAL |
| 7 | DRACULA 2000 |
| 8 | OBJECT OF OBSESSION |

**Uniwide Metromall**
(Las Piñas) tel. 873.5606 loc. 1074
WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30 00

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | |
| 2 | ARAYY |
| 3 | RED PLANET |
| 4 | SUMMER HEAT |
| 5 | – |
| 6 | |

**Uniwide Coastal Mall**
(Parañaque) tel 879.0001 loc. 2152
WATCH 3 MOVIE FOR ONLY P30 00

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | |
| 2 | READY TO RUMBLE |
| 3 | GOSSIP |
| 4 | KANGKONG |

**Center Plaza Cinema**
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HOSTAGE |
| 2 | CAST AWAY |

**FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC**
tel 930.9515

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | RESERVE |
| 2 | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 | HOSTAGE |

**Spring**
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| A | DEMON GATE |

**JC Cinema**
(Parañaque) tel 825.8626

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | BLONDIE |
| 3 | |

**GOTESCO CINEMAS**

**City**
(Manila) tel 734.8568

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | DRACULA 2000 |
| 2 | OBJECT OF OBSESSION |
| 3 | WOMAN ON TOP |
| 4 | HOSTAGE |
| 5 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 6 | LIVE SHOW |
| 7 (DTS) | HANNIBAL |
| 8 (SDDS) | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| 9 (DOLBY) | MS. CONGENIALITY |

**Caloocan**
tel 362.3508

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 4 | HOSTAGE |
| 5 | |
| 6 | |

**Grand Central**
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HOSTAGE |
| 2 | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 4 (SDDS) | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 5 | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| 6 (DOLBY) | DRACULA 2000 |
| 7 (DTS) | HANNIBAL |
| 8 | OBJECT OF OBSESSION |
| 9 | TUHOG |

**Commonwealth**
tel 951.0083

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DTS) | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| 2 | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 4 | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| 5 (SDDS) | HANNIBAL |
| 6 | HOSTAGE |
| 7 (DOLBY) | DRACULA 2000 |
| 8 | OBJECT OF OBSESSION |

**Ortigas**
tel 656.6795

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| 2 | HANNIBAL |
| 3 (DTS) | HOSTAGE |
| 4 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 5 (SDDS) | DRACULA 2000 |
| 6 (DOLBY) | LIVE SHOW |
| 7 (DOLBY) | MS. CONGENIALITY |

**Universal**
(Manila) tel 733.2470

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |

**Sampaguita**
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | LIVE SHOW |

**Dilson**
(Manila) tel 734.7724

| | |
|---|---|
| Dilson | LIVE SHOW |
| Lords | BODY SHOT |
| Jennet | LIVE SHOW |

**MARKETPLACE**
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | LIVE SHOW |
| 2 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 3 | DRACULA 2000 |
| 4 | MS. CONGENIALITY |

**Prima**
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | |
| 3 | LIVE SHOW |

**Super Cinerama**
(Manila) tel 733.4226 or 733.4238

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | DRACULA 2000 |
| 3 | HOSTAGE |
| 4 | LIVE SHOW |
| 5 | MS. CONGENIALITY |

**Divisoria Mall**
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 | HOSTAGE |
| 4 | BLONDIE |
| 5 | RESERVE |
| 6 | DRACULA 2000 |

**Baclaran LRT Cinema**
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 | HOSTAGE |

**CINEMA 2000**

**Cinema 2000 Target Mall**
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 (DTS) | DRACULA |

**Cinema 2000 Waltermart**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 (DTS) | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 (DOLBY) | DRACULA 2000 |
| 4 | WOMAN ON TOP |

**Lianas Cinema**
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 [illegible] | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | BLONDIE |
| 3 | RESERVE |
| 4 (DTS) | LIVE SHOW |

**Lianas MovieCity**
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY) | DRACULA 2000 |
| 2 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 3 (DTS) | LIVE SHOW |
| 4 | BLONDIE |
| 5 | HOSTAGE |

**Olivarez Tri-Cinema**
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 | DRACULA |

**Olivarez Los Baños**
tel (049) 536.5101

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 | DRACULA |

**Olivarez Tagaytay**
tel (046) 413.0311

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | CAST AWAY |
| 2 | HOSTAGE |
| 3 | HANNIBAL |

**Morales Cinema**
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | DRACULA 2000 |
| 2 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 3 | HANNIBAL |

**Sunshine**
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HOSTAGE |
| 2 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 3 | LIVE SHOW |
| 4 | DEMON GATE |

**Cabuyao**
(Laguna City) tel (049) 243.2783

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DTS) | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 2 (DTS) | LIVE SHOW |

**Fourstep**
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |

**Emperor**
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HOSTAGE |
| 2 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 3 | DRACULA 2000 |

**Fiesta World Mall**
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | FAMILY MAN |
| 2 | 102 DALMATIANS |
| 3 | HOSTAGE |
| 4 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |

**Berma**
tel 879.2168

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | |
| 2 | |

**CitiMall**
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | HOSTAGE |
| 2 | LIVE SHOW |
| 3 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 4 | DRACULA 2000 |

**Jade Cinema**
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 (DOLBY EX) | HANNIBAL |
| 2 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| 3 | DRACULA 2000 |
| 4 (DTS EX) | WOMAN ON TOP |

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

THX DOLBY dts SDDS

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734-5012

a special presentation

# Kuh holds fund-raising event for party list

AFTER getting busy with her Valentine shows and provincial concerts, last month, there's no stopping pop diva Kuh Ledesma on spreading her wings this year.

At 6 tonight, Kuh will hold an event to raise funds for the Pinatubo Party at the Republic of Malate. The Pinatubo Party is a candidate for party list in the coming May elections. The Pinatubo platform proposes an alternative development strategy that will directly address the failures of past and current governments in sustainable nation building.

Artists such as Arturo Luz, Claude Tayag, Neal Oshima, Lita Puyat, Ben Cabrera, Anita Magsaysay Ho, Denise Weldon, French painter Damien Anne and Lao Lianben have donated works of art for auction in support of the Pinatubo campaign. Their paintings, including some works from private collections, will be auctioned during the event.

The fund-raising event is open to all who want to support a solution to poverty, environmental degradation and social ills that have beset our country for over 50 years, according to Kuh.

A founding member of Artista Para sa Pagbabago (a group of artists and performers clamoring for political change), Kuh is married to Louie Quirino, a grandson of former President Elpidio Quirino and scion of a prominent political family.

The Pinatubo event is open to the public. For more details, call Headline Concepts at 551-7251 to 55.

## ROBINSONS MOVIE WORLD

STATE-OF-THE-ART CINEMAS

e-mail:htc@uctasia-mla.net
http://www.robinsonsmovieword.com

**NOW SHOWING**

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

**ERMITA**
536-7809-14

1. MS. CONGENIALITY
2. HANNIBAL
3. LIVE SHOW
4. ALMOST FAMOUS
5. KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
6. DRACULA 2000
7. HOSTAGE

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(046)875-3838

1. HANNIBAL
2. LIVE SHOW
3. DRACULA 2000
4. MS. CONGENIALITY
5. KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY
6. HOSTAGE

**BACOLOD**
(034)441-0463

1. FAMILY MAN
2. 102 DALMATIANS
3. TUSONG TWOSOME
4. PROOF OF LIFE
5. HOSTAGE
6. NURSE BETTY

DOLBY dts SDDS

## THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

**ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101**

| | |
|---|---|
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2 | LIVE SHOW |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS) | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS) | DRACULA 2000 |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS) | HANNIBAL |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY) | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY) | HOSTAGE |
| FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY) | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY) | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| FIESTA CARNIVAL | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| NEW FRONTIER | CLOSED FOR RENOVATION |
| **MANILA** | |
| EASTERN | |
| MAXIM | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| MIRAMAR | GATAS / MY PRIVATE TEACHER |
| ODEON | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| ODEON-2 | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| ROBEN | HOSTAGE |
| TANDEM-1 | SA IYONG MGA HAPLOS |
| TANDEM-2 | IKA-7 GLORYA |
| TIMES | HIGHLANDER / LOST SOUL |
| **QUEZON CITY** | |
| ACT-1 | ANAK NG YAKUSA |
| ACT-2 | ANAK NG KANO |
| ACT-3 | ALIPIN NG TUKSO |
| ACT-4 | TURN ON |
| CORONET-2 | LIVE SHOW |
| QUEZON-1 | HANIBAL |
| REMAR | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| REMAR-2 | HOSTAGE |
| **CUBAO** | |
| OCEAN SUPERAMA | LIVE SHOW |
| OCEAN CINEMA-A | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| OCEAN CINEMA-B | BLONDIE |
| **MANDALUYONG CITY** | |
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| CINEMA-1 | MS. CONGENIALITYL |
| CINEMA-2 | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| **CAINTA RIZAL** | |
| STA. LUCIA EAST | (681-54091 TO 19) |
| CINEMA-1 | HOSTAGE |
| CINEMA-2 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| CINEMA-3 | LIVE SHOW |
| CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | CAST AWAY |
| CINEMA-5 (DTS) | OBJECT OF OBSESSION |
| CINEMA-6 | TUSONG TWOSOME |
| CINEMA-7 | BLONDIE |
| CINEMA-8 | TUHOG |
| CINEMA-9 (DTS) | HANNIBAL |
| CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) | MS. CONGENIALITY |
| CINEMA-11 (SDDS) | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| CINEMA-12 | DRACULA 2000 |
| CINEMA-14 | HOSTAGE |
| CINEMA-15 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| **LORES** | |
| CINEMA-2 | KAAWAY HANGGANG HUKAY |
| CINEMA-3 | BLONDIE |
| **POWER PLANT CINEMA** | |
| CINEMA-1 | MISS CONGENIALITY |
| CINEMA-2 | ALMOST FAMOUS |
| CINEMA-3 | HANNIBAL |
| CINEMA-4 | DRACULA 2000 |
| CINEMA-5 | PAY IT FORWARD |
| CINEMA-6 | MISS CONGENIALITY |

# 'Shaft' now on video

MAGNAVISION Home Video releases the gritty action-packed thriller, "Shaft," on VHS format, now available at Astrovision, Landmark and National Bookstore outlets.

The movie stars Samuel L. Jackson under the direction of John Singleton ("Boyz in the Hood").

Those who will buy an original copy of the VHS from official video outlets have the chance to win prizes until March 31. Raffle draws are going to be held at Timezone every Fridays and Saturdays.

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# ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

# Keeping up with the stellar competition

**VIEWFINDER**

*Nestor U. Torre*

THE MOVIES have become much more competitive of late, so even major stars can no longer afford to rest on their laurels. They have their work cut out for them to keep ahead of the competition.

Pacing all other actresses in Hollywood is **Julia Roberts**, who after "My Best Friend's Wedding" can't seem to do anything wrong.

Time was when the exclusive "club" of stars who were paid $20 million per movie was completely closed to women, but Roberts became the first actress to break into that tight group with "Erin Brockovich."

Even better, her performance in the film has been winning her some awards, perhaps culminating in a best actress Oscar next month, so the movie has been giving her the best of both worlds.

Roberts next move is characteristically eventful. In "The Mexican," she costars for the first time with **Brad Pitt**, whose own film career is similarly on a roll.

**Tom Cruise** may have just separated from **Nicole Kidman**, his wife of almost 10 years, but his acting career is not expected to suffer as a result of the split. In fact, his being footloose and fancy-free again may even work to his advantage with his female fans.

Up next for Cruise is "Vanilla Sky," directed by **Cameron Crowe**. His last costarrer with Nicole Kidman is "The Others," a supernatural drama.

**Tom Hanks** is riding high on the success of "Cast Away," which has given him first crack at the best new roles for male stars.

But he's acquired so much clout in Hollywood that he can go off the beaten track and producers will still bankroll his projects, in the thought that Hanks' legions of fans will see him in just about anything that he chooses to appear in.

This year, that's a movie strangely titled "My Big Fat Greek Wedding." And he's also doing "Road to Perdition," the second film (after "American Beauty") of director **Sam Mendes**.

**Russell Crowe** has been starring in American movies for a relatively short time, but he's now earning from $15 million to $20 million per film. That's a testament to his charismatic performances and his clout at the box office, best exemplified by the huge hit that "Gladiator" has become.

While "Proof of Life" didn't do as sensationally at the box office, Crowe still gets offered a lot of big-deal starrer. But he's taking his time choosing from all those goodies.

More than anything else, he wants to act in a prequel of "L.A. Confidential," his first Hollywood film, where his hugely appealing performance served notice to international audiences that a potentially major new star had arrived on the global film scene.

Finally, some flicker shots: **Jim Carrey** hit it big last year with "How the Grinch Stole Christmas," but has opted to do a less commercial follow-up, the intimate romantic film, "The Bijov."

**Mel Gibson** had a hit in "What Women Want" despite the fact that it had no action or adventure scenes at all. But "The Patriot" didn't do as well as expected, so Gibson is taking his time choosing his next movie from the scores of projects he's been offered. The latest word is, he'll make a movie in which he'll play a Marine.

As for **George Clooney**, he has no much qualms and insecurities. "The Perfect Storm" made close to $200 million at the tills, giving Clooney the self-confidence to do the relatively small film, "O, Brother, Where Art Thou? (by the Coen brothers).

After that, however, he's going big and brash again with the glitzy remake of "Ocean's Eleven."

## TV treats

ON SATURDAY, March 10 at 2:15 p.m. on Star Movies, "Volunteers" stars **Tom Hanks, Rita Wilson** and **John Candy**. (Replays on March 16 at 8:30 a.m. and March 22 at 11:45 a.m.).

Hanks plays a wealthy, spoiled Ivy Leaguer who ends up as a Peace Corps volunteer who is assigned to a hardship post in Thailand for two seemingly interminable years.

At 7 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, the program "Dams" investigates the power behind the man-made superstructures that changed the American West in a big way.

At 7:30 p.m. on Star Movies, "Lake Placid" topbills **Bridget Fonda, Bill Pullman** and **Oliver Platt**. When a man is eaten alive by an unknown creature, the local game warden teams up with a paleontologist from New York to find and capture the beast.

# Celebrity bachelor badmouths his dates

**DOLLYWOOD**

*Dolly Anne Carvajal*

IN show biz, as in the rest of life, one question usually leads to more questions. Sometimes, though, some questions are left unanswered and are simply forgotten when a new issue arises.

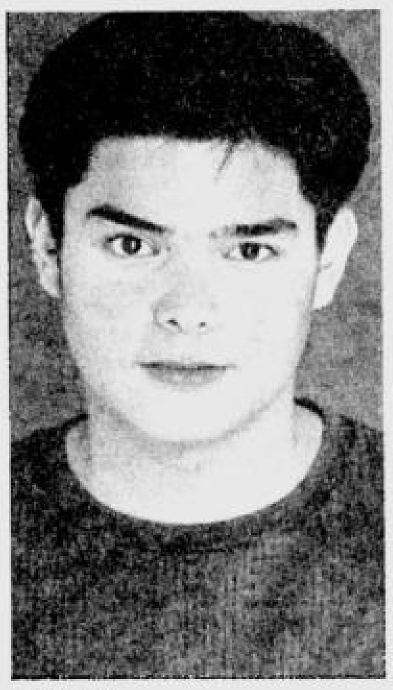
Stars either have scripted answers, typical show biz answers, or ready-made alibis. And yet people keep asking, either out of curiosity or just to take their mind off the daily grind.

When I'm in a party, friends would always tell me, "What's the latest *chika*?" And I always shoot back, "Depends what you want to know."

Now that I think about it, every show biz story has the same ingredients, only in varying amounts and with a different recipe. Still, whatever way it's served, show biz news never fails to move and excite Filipinos.

Here are some of the raging questions that have come my way recently. In time, the answers will surface. Sooner or later, the real score will be revealed.

- How true are rumors that **Pops Fernandez** will have a lifestyle magazine show which will replace a morning program soon?
- Two top-rating news programs are said to be gearing up for some major changes. Will these take effect before or after the May elections?
- Rumors say a TV host will undergo a change of image soon due to network management's decision. Will the TV host be more effective in the new field?
- Could it be true that a much sought-after bachelor, who's a celebrity in his own right, has the nasty habit of bad-mouthing his dates after he wines and dines them? That's even worse than being a kiss-and-tell.
- Is **Trisha Versoza** the pretty *colegiala* **Dingdong Dantes** has been eyeing for quite some time now? But he reportedly hasn't made a move yet because **Antoinette Taus** is still around. If and when Toni leaves for her one-year vacation in the US, will Dingdong finally pursue Trisha?



DANTES

TAUS

For feedback, e-mail *wateringhole2000@yahoo.com.*

# Allan K restages standup comedy act

FUNNYMAN Allan K does it again at the Downtown of Hotel Rembrandt, 10 tonight, with his new show, "The Nose Have It," after its fully packed crowd last week.

The comedian showcases his talent for singing and making people laugh through his songs and standup comedy acts which have been patronized by people from all walks of life.

Aside from his comic routines, Allan likewise excites his audience through his "Request" portion, where he sings any song thrown to him by his audience.

Allan's guest is young diva Bituin Escalante. His bosom buddy Leonard Obal joins him on March 15.

For inquiries, call 749-6504 or 373-3333.

ALLAN K

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# Lensmen, writers collaborate on gay-themed book

A LOCAL publishing house recently came up with what it describes as the country's "first and only gay-themed" book series replete with sexy and nude shots of male models by four of Manila's finest photographers, and literary works by some of the noted writers today.

Titled "Rice!," the book is another release by Metropolis Publishing, the same house that published "Brief Encounters," the country's first photography art book focusing on male beauty.

The 140-page "Rice!" contains the photo galleries of popular lensmen Raymund Isaac, Jay Javier, Raymond Lontok, and Raul Teehankee; and the portfolios of sexy stars John Apacible and Juan Carlos Castro. It likewise has features, essays and fiction by such noted writers and journalists as Danton Remoto, Andrew Paredes, Michael L. Tan, Joseph O. Cortes and Leah Puyat.

Lontok, who is also "Rice!" publisher, says the book will have a different set of photographers every issue in order to utilize other talents in the industry.

Butch Franco, a former beat reporter for a number of major dailies and now "Rice!" editor, says that while the book contains a "patchwork" of different ideas on and approaches to the alternative lifestyle, it has managed to tackle their harmony and discord.

He explains that the book will instead help gay men realize that it is okay for them to accept who they are, and still become productive members of the society.

Among the book's exciting reads are Puyat's essay on the "gay-ing' of Manila, Franco's profile of comfort gay Walter Dempster Jr. (a.k.a. Walterina Markova), Remoto's honest and poignant account of his life while growing up gay, Erica von Brown's first-person article on his visit to a gay theater in Los Angeles, Tan's essay on whether homosexuality is nature or nurture, and Cortes' article on how the world of music has developed its own coping mechanism with regard to the onslaught of AIDS in the last two decades of the 20th century.

"Rice!" is being sold for P350 at selected outlets here and abroad.

To get a copy, contact Metropolis Publishing at 525-3654 or send e-mail to ricemanila@hotmail.com.

# Top artists sing megahits in new album

"MEGAHIT 10," the latest edition of the "Megahit" series, eclipses the previous installments as the new compilation contains all the biggest new hits.

Robbie Williams' "Better Man" and Kylie Minogue's "Please Stay" are both in the collection, plus their collaboration, "Kids."

Dance hits such as "Stomp" by Steps, "Groovejet (If This Ain't Love)" by Spiller and the Baha Men's "Who Let the Dogs Out," provide groove to the album.

Soul singer Craig David carries out his hit, "Walking Away," while megabands such as Michael Learns To Rock ("You Took My Heart Away"), The Moffatts ("Who Do You Love") and Coldplay ("Yellow") adds rock flavor to the compilation.

"Megahit 10" also gathers the hottest boy bands: N'Sync ("This I Promise You") and the Backstreet Boys ("Shape of My Heart"), while girl power is ably represented by Melanie C. ("If That Were Me"), Spice Girls ("Holler"), Christina Aguillera ("I Turn To You"), Britney Spears ("Stronger") and French pop sensation Larusso ("On Ne S'aimera").

"This is yet another exciting release," says Jojo Bacasmas, strategic label of EMI Music Philippines. "This new album lives up to the 'Megahit' tradition of gathering the most popular names in pop music today."

WILLIAMS

MINOGUE

"Megahit 10" CDs come with a free VCD featuring Britney Spears, N'Sync and the Backstreet Boys, plus a chance to meet your all-time favorite "Megahit 10" artist.

Answer the entry form found inside the album and send t to OctoArts-EMI Music, 25/F Atlanta Center, Annapolis Street, Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila.

Ten "Megahit 10" CDs are also up for grabs in cyberspace. Just log on to www.music.pinoycentral.com and be among the first 10 people to get the "Megahit 10" questions right.

Special "Megahit 10" T-shirts courtesy of Bunny Jeans and Shirts are also in store for lucky listeners of Magic 89.9 and Monster Radio RX 93.1.

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1<br>MISS CONGENIALITY - G<br>11:20, 1:45, 4:10, 6:35, 9:00 | 2<br>ALMOST FAMOUS - R 18<br>11:00, 1:35, 4:10, 6:45, 9:20 | 3<br>HANNIBAL - R 18<br>1:40, 4:20, 7:20, 10:00 |
| 4<br>DRACULA 2000 - R 18<br>1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00 | 5<br>PAY IT FORWARD - P 13<br>11:40, 2:15, 4:40 | 6<br>MISS CONGENIALITY - G<br>12:35, 3:00, 5:25, 7:50, 10:15 |

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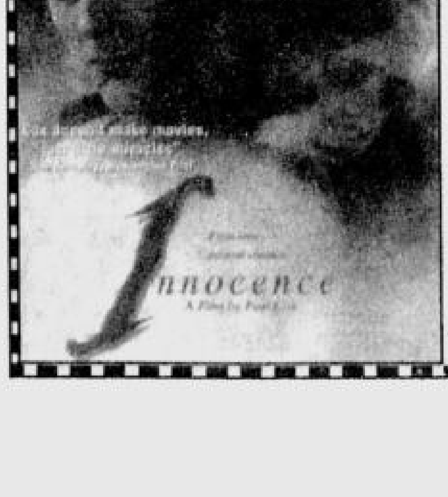

Innocence
Julia Blake Charles Tingwell Terry Norris
A gentle film that evokes memories of young love that have ripened into full bloom.
"The best single film I saw in the entire Cannes Film Festival"
--- Roger Ebert & the movies
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from the writer/director of Jerry Maguire
ALMOST FAMOUS

Must-see film on sex & rock 'n roll
'Almost Famous' Now Showing
In the tradition of Cameron Crowe's Oscar-nominated JERRY MAGUIRE, ALMOST FAMOUS is a coming-of-age tale that is intelligent, well-written and infused with humor in unlikely places.
Inspired by the real-life experiences of the Academy Award nominee writer/director, ALMOST FAMOUS is the story of an unabashed rock 'n roll music fan tasked to write for Rolling Stone magazine in the '70s at age 15. As he joins the band Stillwater on tour, he befriends the band members and their groupies, and grows up, losing his virginity along the way.
ALMOST FAMOUS won a Golden Globe BEST PICTURE Award (Musical/Comedy), and 4 Academy Award nominations for Original Screenplay, Editing, and Supporting Actress for Kate Hudson and Frances McDormand. The movie also stars Billy Crudup, Jason Lee, Patrick Fugit, Anna Paquin and Fairuza Balk.
Embraced by critics, ALMOST FAMOUS is described as "absolutely fabulous," "honest and brilliant," "bighearted and bittersweet," and "filled with splendid performances."

## • Messages •

My warmest congratulations to the organizers and participants to the various activities in celebration of the Women's Month and the International Women's Day. On March 8, we reaffirm our advocacy for women's rights and world peace together with other partners led by the National Commission on the Role of the Filipino Women.

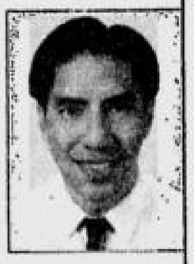
In support of this year's theme: "Kababaihan, Kabalikat sa Kapayapaan at Kaunlaran," we launch the Women and Peace Ribbon Advocacy Campaign. The campaign enjoins everyone to respect and uphold the rights of women.

However, the various inequities in health hamper the realization of these goals. Through the Health Sector Reform Agenda (HSRA) we aim to reduce the burden of diseases that weigh heavily on women and children through the improvement of preventive care activities and in ensuring that health facilities and services are available and affordable to majority of our people.

We wish to commend Sun Life Financial for joining this year's celebration by providing an innovative means of financing health care for these health concerns. Together, let us develop a gender sensitive health care system guided by the ideals of integrity, excellence and compassion. In so doing, we honor the contribution of women to human development and peace.

Mabuhay!

**Manuel M. Dayrit, MD, MSc**
*Secretary of Health*



The Insurance Commission wishes to congratulate all Filipinas during the month-long celebration of Women's Month. This month should be a commemoration of all those who have stood up to fight for their rights as well as for those who continuously fight for what they believe in. Aware of their potentials and capabilities, I say it is about time we acknowledge and give importance to the special needs of Filipinas.

In this light, I welcome Sun Life Financial's Sun Milady and Sun Milady Plus in the roster of insurance products in the market that cater, specifically, to the needs of every Filipina. We wish that more products like these come out to encourage and inspire Filipinas to attain financial independence today and in the future.

In behalf of the Insurance Commission, I wish all Filipinas successful and fulfilling lives ahead. Congratulations!

**Eduardo T. Malinis**
*Insurance Commissioner*

1949

Since 1998, the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women spearheads the annual activities for the Women's Month and Women's Day Celebration. Presidential Proclamation 277 and 224, and Republic Act 6949 opened a venue for us to review how far women have come in their struggle for liberation, peace, equality and development. Having our 2nd woman president Her Excellency Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, this occasion is an opportunity for both women and men to mobilize for a meaningful change towards making this a millennium of women's full participation in leadership and decision-making.

This year's activities revolve around the theme: Kababaihan: Kabalikat sa Kapayapaan at Kaunlaran. Peace, development and democracy form an interactive triangle. They are mutually reinforcing. Without democracy, there is no sustainable development, and disparities arise leading to domination and destruction of peace and order.

The call of women's leadership in governance under the Macapagal-Arroyo Administration can help improve the status of our women in the society, economy and development. Thus, we are confident that with the support of a Woman President to NCRFW, we are confident that other issues such as poverty alleviation and economic empowerment of women will be addressed.

In behalf of the Commission, I salute the Filipina Women for the contributions they have made to the development of our country. Moreover, I pay proud tribute to those women who continue to struggle in our plight for gender equality and the attainment of sustainable development beneficial to both women and men.

Happy Women's Day to all of you!

AJB Reyes
**Dr. Amelu Benitez-Reyes,** *Chairperson, National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women*

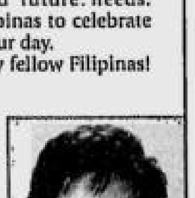
It is with great pride and respect that I extend my warmest greetings to all Filipinas this Women's Day. We have come a long way from simply being a light inside our homes to being the light of Philippine society. This day is a declaration of our achievements and contributions to our country.

Today, countless celebrations honoring women will take place in communities all over the globe. In the Philippines, we at Sun Life Financial join the celebration by paying tribute to every Filipina with our Sun Milady and Sun Milady Plus - products that specifically address her present and future needs.

We encourage all Filipinas to celebrate this day because -- this is our day.

Congratulations to my fellow Filipinas!

Esther C. Tan
**Mrs. Esther C. Tan**
*President, Sun Life of Canada (Philippines), Inc.*



Sun Life Financial

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# LET'S CELEBRATE WOMEN'S MONTH

On March 8, 2001, women all over the world will celebrate International Women's Day and look back to nine decades of struggle for equality, justice, peace, and development. It will be a day to reflect on their progress and a day to call for more change and action. But mostly, it will be a day to recognize and celebrate the acts of courage of ordinary women who have stood their ground and fought for their rights and independence.

Women have arrived from an almost century-long march to their current station in society. They have become presidents, leaders, and prime movers. They are significantly contributing in the home, workplace, and community. And they have managed to rise above their chosen fields in the face of seemingly insurmountable difficulties. They are now enjoying the fruits of their labor.

Here in the Philippines, the Filipina, who has kept pace with the best in the world, will be celebrating the whole month of March as her month.

The country has once again put in power a woman to lead the nation. And many Filipinas, like the lady president, are playing a pivotal role in the country's social and economic development. And not just a few are taking notice. Many companies are currently designing products to help women achieve their goals and, at the same time, satisfy their needs. Companies, like Sun Life Financial, offer products and services to address these needs. For example, Sun Milady and Sun Milady Plus give women a fighting chance against diseases like breast cancer, cervical and ovarian cancers - all women-specific diseases.

These products likewise provide Filipinas with a lifetime insurance protection until their 100th birthday.

Furthermore, their insurance coverage generates cash value, which they can use as a loan collateral, a supplementary fund for retirement, or a source of investible or emergency fund.

Apart from the real financial independence these products provide, Sun Milady and Sun Milady Plus shield women against high medical expenses, particularly those arising from some of the most common dreaded diseases–with a lump sum payment. The same goes for surgical or operating expenses. In addition, Sun Milady Plus provides extra benefits for the first two children that a woman delivers. It also protects her from pregnancy complications.

With all these benefits from Sun Life Financial, the Filipina can really enjoy all her roles and independence as a woman.

To all Filipinas, congratulations!

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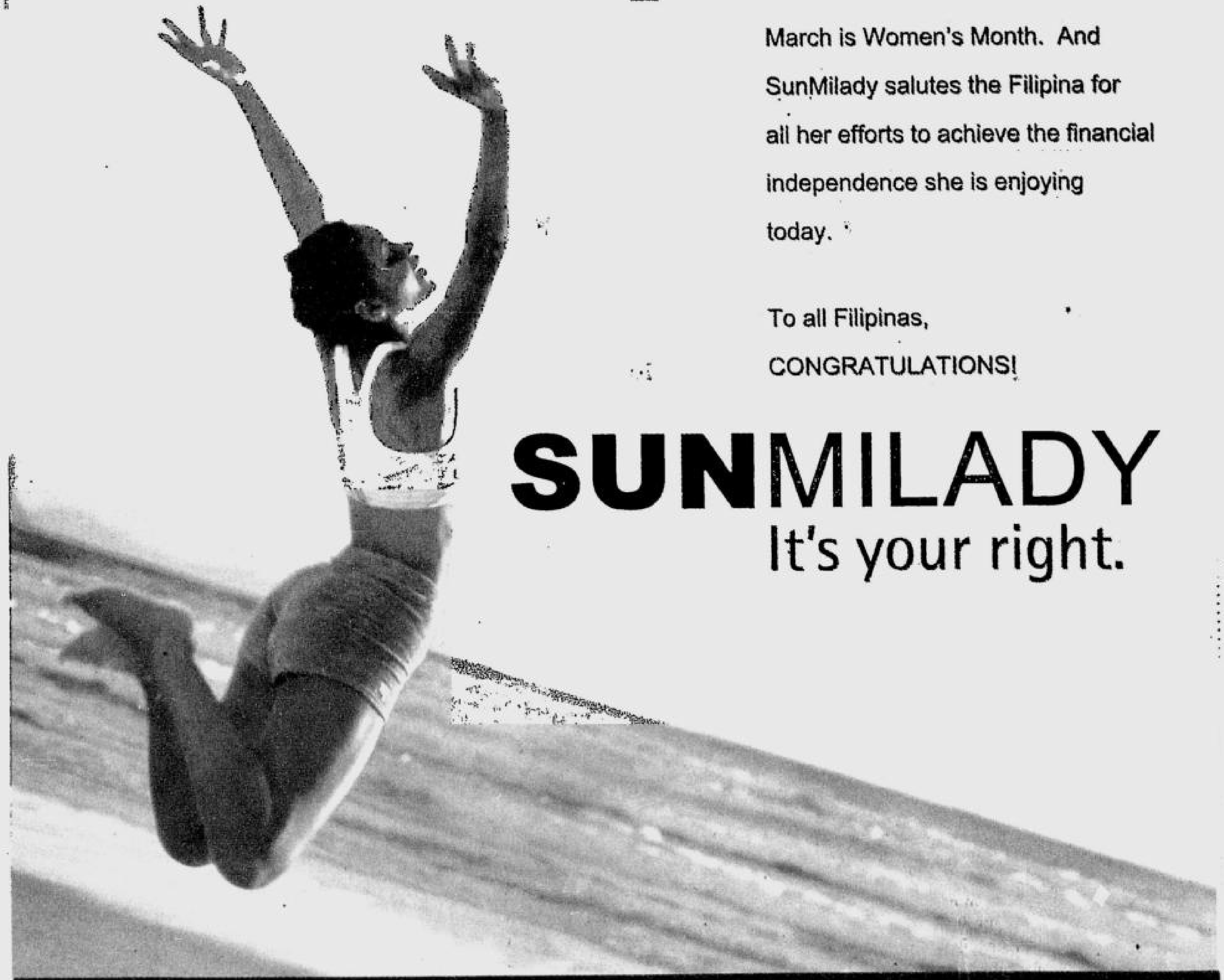
# Celebrate Your Financial Independence



March is Women's Month. And SunMilady salutes the Filipina for all her efforts to achieve the financial independence she is enjoying today.

To all Filipinas,
CONGRATULATIONS!

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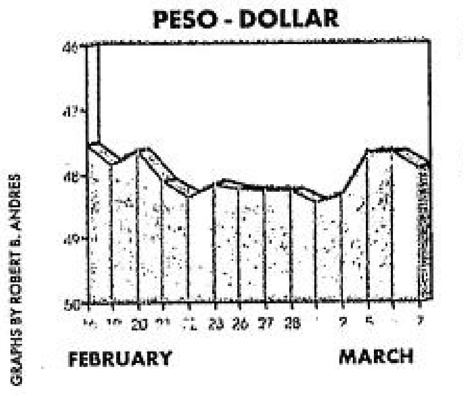
# BSP sees peso recovery to 44:$1

## INDICATORS

### CURRENCIES



**Peso-Dollar Rate**

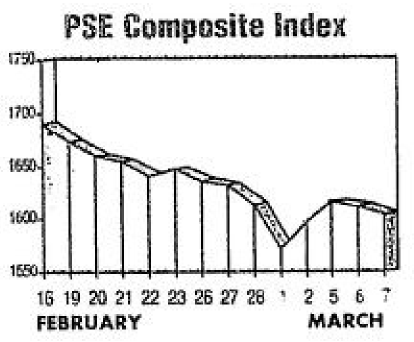
**P 47.905 = $1**
As of 5 p.m., March 7, 2001

**¥ 119.24 = $1**
The US dollar was trading at 119.24 as of 5 p.m., March 7, 2001

**GOLD:$260.90/261.40**
per ounce Hong Kong, March 7, 2001

### STOCK MARKET

## Stocks end lower



SHARES closed weaker yesterday as market liquidity continued to dry up with more and more investors keeping a tight hold on their money while waiting for more signs of improvement in the economy.

The 33-share composite index lost 7.62 points, or 0.47 percent, to end at 1,603.85 after trading in a tight band of only about 11 points.

The broader All Shares index was up slightly 1.38 points, or 0.18 percent, to 776.93.

*Reuters*

(See stock market report on Page B2)

By CLARISSA S. BATINO

ROSY prospects for the economy should push the peso up to 44 against the dollar in the coming months and enable the local currency to hit an average of 46:$1 for the year.

This was the fearless forecast of Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura during yesterday's breakfast forum sponsored by the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines.

"The peso will probably be at a low end of 44 to a dollar and a high end of 48, or an average of 46," Buenaventura said.

The peso yesterday closed at 47.905 following the strong rebound last Monday in reaction to the 13-0 vote of the Supreme Court that affirmed the legitimacy of the Macapagal administration.

Economist Romulo Neri of the Asian Institute of Management, however, ruled out the possibility that the peso would recover below 45 to $1 within the year. He said a 45-47 to $1 level was a good number for both exporters and importers.

Foreseen weakness in the US. and Japanese economies, which are both strong trading partners of the Philippines, could halt growth in exports this year, Neri said.

On the other hand, the domestic economy is expected to compensate for this, but in the process pull up imports. As a result, the weakness in exports and improved imports would prevent a strong recovery for the peso.

Buenaventura said that with the political premium totally out of the equation, the peso should recover strongly in the coming months even as he cautioned against influences of developments within the region as well as in the country's major trading partners such as the United States.

"A lot will depend on the US economy, if it would have a soft landing or not. But at least we are no longer paying a political premium," the central bank governor pointed out.

Currency traders, however, said the BSP governor's projection was a bit optimistic. While they agreed the currency would not weaken past the 49-to-$1 level, they were expecting it to hit an average of 47.50 to $1 this year.

"It is based on the premise that the government will get a good majority of the Senate race that would assure the Macapagal administration that its economic and fiscal reforms will push through," a trader said.

Another trader said the rally in the foreign exchange could be short-lived because the peso was the only currency in the region that had improved. A lasting recovery still hinged on solid reforms that the government must put in place, said a trader from a local bank.

The peso was heavily battered during the previous administration when it sank to a historic low of 54.79 to $1 on Jan. 19, the same day it recovered and closed at P47.50 to $1 after the military defected and joined the Edsa II People Power movement.

# Gov't admits budget gap widened in February

THE BUDGET shortfall widened in February from a month earlier but the government remained confident of achieving its yearend deficit target of P145 billion, Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said yesterday.

In an interview with Reuters, Boncodin said the February deficit would be bigger than January's, as the government had to settle a number of bills in the month.

The end January budget deficit was P6.386 billion and February's deficit was expected to be released this week.

The 2000 deficit was P136.11 billion.

She said the bulk of the government's regular payments fall due in the first two quarters and the full-year deficit target remained intact.

"Our projection is that our first quarter deficit will be about P48 billion," she said.

Boncodin, a veteran of 20 years in the department who served as budget undersecretary in the administration of former President Fidel Ramos, said the government would push ahead in June with plans for a P10.9-billion supplementary budget.

This would be on top of the 2000 budget spending of P629 billion that has been reenacted for this year after Congress last month failed to approve a proposed P725-billion spending program.

Boncodin said some of the funds would be used to cover a 5-percent pay increase for government workers but there would be no money earmarked for new big ticket projects this year.

"What we intend to do is utilize the existing portfolio (of projects) and try to make it a little more efficient and accelerate the utilization of that," she said.

She added that the supplementary spending has been included in the yearend deficit target.

A number of ideas have been mooted recently to reduce government debt, including debt swaps and securitization of government assets.

Boncodin said they were just options at this point although the securitization suggestion was being discussed in the Department of Finance.

Under this proposal, the government would issue bonds backed by income generated from government assets.

Philippine Gaming Corp. would be the initial agency targeted.

Boncodin said among its plans to improve revenue generation, the budget department was looking at overhauling the fiscal incentives scheme.

Under this arrangement, specified businesses are entitled to tax holidays and other incentives.

Some members of the foreign business community have voiced concern about the effect of watering down the scheme on investment and the country's regional competitiveness.

Boncodin said the department wanted to see where it could improve its revenue base but at the same time it had no intention of scaring off foreign investors.

"We want to remain competitive with our neighbors in Asia . . . We are very well aware of that but nonetheless we want to see what damage (the incentives) are doing to our revenue collection."

Boncodin also said she was confident the government could obtain the bulk of the money it needed to pay for the deficit locally, with around 76 percent coming from domestic sources and 24 percent from overseas. *Reuters*

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Ford Libis, 186 E. Rodriguez Jr. Avenue, Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City; Trunk Line: 637-2044; Fax No.: 637-6008
Ford Makati, 2287 Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati City 1231; Trunk Line: 818-5555; Fax No.: 815-0513

# Blood is thicker than waiter

**BREAKTIME**

*Conrado R. Banal III*

THIS cute administration of Gloriaetta has a most compelling reason to take control of San Miguel Corp. And that is, at least according to Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo, well, ahh, you see, because such is the position of Kompil, damnit.

Now, that is not one of the sacraments of the Catholic Church. It only sounds like one, but it's not quite that. Kompil was one of the countless numbers of groups that tried to force the resignation of the "effectively resigned" President Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

He, in turn, was also known in the whole wide world as the man named Band...Wrist Band. Now he is known for being the guy who, if you believe the military has intelligence, recently tried to flee the country to run away from various cases.

This cute administration filed the cases against him one after another really, very, very fast. With the Supreme Court's really, very, very fast ruling, he wants to run away, apparently, because of the indisputable fact that he already resigned—effectively.

* * *

FOR its foremost political figure, anyway, Kompil has Tita Cory. Years ago, she was known as Corazon Cojuangco. Thus, because of the striking similarity in their names, it's highly possible she really is the cousin of San Miguel's big boss, Eduardo Cojuangco.

But this is one case, meaning, control of the country's biggest private and yet publicly listed business, when you can say blood is not thicker than water. Waiter, maybe, but not water! I don't know, but Tita Cory perhaps heard things from waiters.

Some 15 years ago in 1986, as soon as Tita Cory was installed into power by the military revolt that ousted the dictator, Ferdinand Marcos, and his cronies, who, by the way, included Cojuangco, San Miguel fell under government control.

Cojuangco regained control of San Miguel after a short period of only 12 years. But not for long! Romulo said the San Miguel shares that Cojuangco claims to be his belong to coconut farmers beyond doubt. This is so because it is the position of Kompil.

* * *

CLEARLY, then, this cute administration of Gloriaetta has no choice but to take over control of San Miguel from Cojuangco. It was like a . . . well, "campaign promise." If Gloriaetta would get into power, the position of Kompil would become her position, too.

Still, during the time of Kuya Eddie, who was the choice of Tita Cory to replace her, the government almost settled the San Miguel case for good. Almost! Cojuangco then was selling out of the company. The deal fell through, unfortunately.

In that same deal, the boys of Kuya Eddie recognized that, indeed, Cojuangco had the paper trail to show his ownership of the San Miguel shares. As for the United Coconut Planters Bank, nevertheless, they believed Cojuangco's claim was hard to prove.

And so I asked Romulo about such an, er, "position" of the go-go-go administration of Kuya Eddie. Well, that was Kuya Eddie's time. Today, the government must take over San Miguel, again. It's nothing personal; it's the position of Kompil.

* * *

A LONG time ago, back in 1980s, when the mayor of Manila was Mel Lopez, the city government closed down the casinos of Pagcor. While it became a big issue, Lopez still lost in his anti-casino campaign. He did not enjoy the backing of the Palace.

Lopez tells me that he thought he was merely fulfilling one of the many, ahh, campaign promises of Tita Cory. He joined Tita Cory in the protest movement that deposed the dictatorship. One position of hers was, according to Lopez, "no gambling."

Luckily, the Palace did not want the casinos to be padlocked by Lopez or anybody else. Pagcor presented to the Office of the President a consistent source of funds. "*Masarap pala iyon,*" is how Lopez now describes the Palace's view on the casinos.

Recently, Lopez tried but again failed to make a comeback. He just lost to former Rep. Amado Bagatsing as this cute administration's coalition's official candidate for mayor of Manila. The ghost of the casino closures still haunts Lopez.

* * *

ONLY after seven years, the Lopez group, which has no relations whatsoever to Lopez the casino-buster, is nearing a deal for funding the rehabilitation of the North Luzon Tollway. Only seven years! This, if you ask me, is really a feat.

Sometime ago, New York City got funding from the US federal government to build a subway station. That was in 1948, or maybe 1938, but then again, it could be 1928. *Basta*, it was a long time ago. Today they have yet to build the station.

Actually handling the tollway project is the Manila North Tollways Corp., or MNTC. It's a joint venture between the Lopez group and the original owner of the tollway, PNCC, which is one of those hybrid companies.

PNCC was a private, publicly listed company. Thus it had many stockholders. The government acquired it years ago. It ran into financial trouble. With the government in control, the company got itself into more financial trouble. That kind of hybrid!

* * *

LOPEZ group insiders say that MNTC had a hard time in getting the right of way around the existing interchanges. Precisely, the project aims to ease traffic. Aside from adding more lanes, the plan called for a little redesigning of the exits. MNTC needed more space.

In 1994, seven government outfits decided that it was time to rehabilitate the tollway. You see, the road never enjoyed a semblance of care, ever since PNCC fell in the hands of the government.

Surprisingly, only four years later, or by June 1998, right before his term would expire, Kuya Eddie already approved the agreement between the Lopez group and PNCC that, from then on, the MNTC would take control of the tollway.

Less than three years later, MNTC is well on the way to a financial package for the project. MNTC president and CEO Jose de Jesus, the former public works secretary, says he has been negotiating with the financiers for only the past two years.

* * *

ME, I am really confident that Ping de Jesus can swing the financial deal. He knows this stuff. He is the one who built all those flyovers in Metro Manila out of savings in the budget of other government agencies. Really, there was no approved budget for them.

Confidence, moreover, at least according to this cute administration and its supporters in the business community, is building up really, very, very fast, particularly after the Supreme Court's really very very fast ruling.

In fact, confidence is so high that the stock market is racking up ultra thin volumes lately. Yesterday, the value of trading amounted to less than P300 million. Some P190 million of that was a "cross sale." Without this, the volume could have disappeared.

MNTC only have to iron out one last issue with the financiers. It has something to do with the "delivery of right of way." They are trying to agree on what "delivery" actually means, and in this case, the dictionary cannot help. You know—it's technical.

# PSE modifies demutualization strategy

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange will convert the shareholdings of each of its 184 member-brokers into trading rights under a demutualization strategy approved by its board of governors.

PSE president Ramon T. Garcia said a demutualization model that would allow brokers to retain trading rights even if their shares have been sold would be submitted to the annual membership meeting this Saturday when the members also elect a new board of governors.

Last December, the member-brokers approved the conversion of the PSE into a stock corporation with an authorized capital of P5 billion. Their seats were converted into eight million shares with a par value of P1.

At the same time, Garcia said new guidelines would be drawn up for new groups who would want to obtain trading rights under a demutualized exchange.

"There will be 184 stockholders of PSE which will also have trading rights. If one of the 184 wants to, he can dispose of his trading rights at any time and if he does, he will remain the owner of the shares," Garcia said.

Garcia said the board believed that the most viable blueprint for the PSE's demutualization, which is mandated by the Securities Regulation Code passed last year, was to cut off the umbilical cord between trading rights and shares ownership.

He also said the PSE board agreed to list the shares but not simultaneously with the demutualization process, which is required by law to be completed by Aug. 8 this year.

"What will happen with the listing is that it will become attractive. We can't give any specific time but I'd like to imagine it will be listed within one or two years," he said.

But Garcia said the Securities and Exchange Commission, which has drawn up the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) for the Securities Regulation Code, should soon clarify how much the member-brokers can own after the mandated demutualization process.

According to the SRC, no single industry can control 20 percent of the demutualized stock exchange and that the IRR further specified that the stock brokerage industry was not exempted from this cap.

But Garcia said the conflict arose from the fact that member-brokers were allowed by the same law to control up to 49 percent of PSE's board representation.

"How can brokers control 49 percent of board representation when you restrict them to 20 percent ownership?" Garcia asked.

Based on the latest financial report of the PSE, its total assets (adjusted by valuation increments) amounted to P1.57 billion as of last Oct. 31 in the form of cash, short- and long-term investments, receivables, property, equipment and other current assets. On the other hand, its liabilities amounted to only P95 million, thus leaving it with a net worth of P1.47 billion.

To determine each member's share in the demutualized company, the net worth of P1.47 billion was divided into 184, representing the number of outstanding members, thus resulting in a share of P8 million each. With an assumed par value of P1, the number of shares that will be issued to each member will thus be 8 million shares.

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CORPORATION FINANCE DEPARTMENT

IN THE MATTER OF
GLOBAL BUSINESS BANK, INC. : Registration of Securities
- Registrant -
x------------------------------------------x

## O R D E R

Upon consideration of the Registration Statement and other papers and documents attached thereto which was filed for and on behalf of **Global Business Bank, Inc.**, the Commission resolved to render effective the same for the registration of its Thirty One Million Eight Hundred Seventy Two Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Four (31,872,554) common shares representing the unissued portion of its authorized capital stock, with the par value of P50.00 per share at the offering price of P62.75 each.

Let a Certificate of Permit to Sell Securities be issued in favor of Global Business Bank, Inc. authorizing the sale of the aforementioned securities.

Let this Order be published at the expense of the corporation once in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines within ten (10) days from date hereof. The corporation is hereby directed to furnish the Commission with a copy of the affidavit of publication of this Order.

SO ORDERED.

EDSA, Mandaluyong City, Philippines, February 27, 2001.

JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN
*Director*

(PDI - March 8, 2001)

## Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of Wednesday, March 7, 2001)

| STOCKS | OPEN | HIGH | LOW | CLOSE | VOLUME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES** | | | | | |
| **BANKS** | | | | | |
| Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc. | 6.7 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 6.7 | 1,000 |
| Banco Filipino Sav & Mort | 105 | 105 | 105 | 105 | 100 |
| Bank of the Phil. Islands | 69.5 | 70 | 69.5 | 70 | 163,700 |
| Chinatrust Comm. Bank | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 1,000 |
| Equitable Pci Bank Inc. | 53 | 53 | 53 | 53 | 26,500 |
| First E-Bank Corp. | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 2.1 | 6,000 |
| Global Business Bank Inc. | 66 | 66 | 66 | 66 | 100 |
| Metropolitan Bank & Trust | 228 | 231 | 227 | 230 | 80,830 |
| Prudential Bank | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 | 10,000 |
| Philippine National Bank | 50.5 | 51.5 | 49 | 50.5 | 501,100 |
| Phil. Savings Bank | 29 | 30 | 29 | 30 | 22,000 |
| Union Bank of the Phil. | 26 | 26 | 26 | 26 | 5,900 |
| **FINANCIAL SERVICE** | | | | | |
| Bankard Inc. | 1.58 | 1.58 | 1.58 | 1.58 | 136,000 |
| Filipino Fund Inc. | 0.39 | 0.39 | 0.39 | 0.39 | 10,000 |
| First Metro Invest. Corp. | 250 | 250 | 250 | 250 | 500 |
| Manulife Financial Corp. | 1270 | 1280 | 1270 | 1280 | 3,530 |
| Sun Life Financial Serv. | 975 | 985 | 975 | 985 | 3,670 |
| **COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL** | | | | | |
| **COMMUNICATION** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. | 46.5 | 47 | 46.5 | 46.5 | 4,400 |
| Digital Telecom Phils Inc. | 0.62 | 0.63 | 0.62 | 0.63 | 990,000 |
| Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp. | 3.65 | 3.65 | 3.65 | 3.65 | 12,000 |
| Piltel | 0.64 | 0.64 | 0.64 | 0.64 | 250,000 |
| Phil. Long Dis Tel Co. | 805 | 810 | 790 | 790 | 51,360 |
| Ivantage Corp. | 1.04 | 1.04 | 1 | 1.04 | 150,000 |
| Philweb.Com Inc. | 0.0675 | 0.075 | 0.065 | 0.075 | 459,700,000 |
| **POWER & ENERGY** | | | | | |
| Manila Electric Co. A | 53 | 53 | 53 | 53 | 23,200 |
| Manila Electric Co. B | 62 | 63 | 62 | 62.5 | 236,300 |
| Petron Corp. | 1.88 | 1.88 | 1.88 | 1.88 | 534,000 |
| Trans-Asia Oil and Energy | 0.95 | 0.95 | 0.95 | 0.95 | 20,000 |
| **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** | | | | | |
| Asian Terminals Inc. | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 250,000 |
| Int'l Container Term'l Sv | 1.26 | 1.26 | 1.24 | 1.26 | 10,113,000 |
| William, Gothong & Aboitiz | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 52,000 |
| **CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS** | | | | | |
| Republic Glass Hldg. Corp | 0.86 | 0.86 | 0.86 | 0.86 | 60,000 |
| **FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO** | | | | | |
| Cosmos Bottling Corp. | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2,000 |
| Jollibee Foods Corp. | 11.75 | 12.25 | 11.75 | 12 | 416,900 |
| Liberty Flour Mills Inc. | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 208,900 |
| La Tondena DistillersInc | 37 | 37 | 37 | 37 | 41,000 |
| RFM Corp. | 1.3 | 1.32 | 1.3 | 1.3 | 1,151,000 |
| San Miguel Corp. A | 48 | 48.5 | 48 | 48 | 10,100 |
| San Miguel Corp. B | 56 | 57.5 | 56 | 57 | 228,700 |
| Vitarich Corp. | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 100,000 |
| **HOLDING FIRMS** | | | | | |
| Ayala Corp. | 7.6 | 7.7 | 7.6 | 7.7 | 985,000 |
| Aboitiz Equity Ventures | 1.58 | 1.58 | 1.58 | 1.58 | 780,000 |
| Alliance Global Group Inc. | 12.25 | 12.5 | 12.25 | 12.25 | 3,000 |
| Ajo.Net Holdings Inc. | 1 | 1 | 0.98 | 0.98 | 30,000 |
| A. Soriano Corp. | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 0.28 | 200,000 |
| APC Group Inc. | 0.235 | 0.235 | 0.235 | 0.235 | 930,000 |
| Alcorn Gold Res. Corp. | 0.007 | 0.007 | 0.007 | 0.007 | 4,000,000 |
| Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc. | 12.75 | 12.75 | 12.75 | 12.75 | 500 |
| Boulevard Holdings Inc. | 0.24 | 0.25 | 0.23 | 0.23 | 60,000 |
| Benpres Holdings Corp. | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 3.1 | 906,000 |
| Crown Equities Inc. | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.26 | 0.26 | 30,000 |
| Southeast Asian Cement | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 230,000 |
| Filinvest Dev. Corp. | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.36 | 1.36 | 130,000 |
| First Phil Hldgs Corp. | 23.75 | 23.75 | 23.5 | 23.5 | 55,700 |
| Global Equities Inc. | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 950,000 |
| Guoco Holdings (Phils.) | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 200,000 |
| Ionics Inc. | 13.25 | 13.25 | 13.25 | 13.25 | 25,000 |
| Ipeople Inc. | 0.86 | 0.86 | 0.86 | 0.86 | 60,000 |
| Macroasia Corp. | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 1.8 | 3,000 |
| Megaworld Corp. | 0.9 | 0.9 | 0.89 | 0.9 | 500,000 |
| Metro Pacific Corp. | 0.59 | 0.6 | 0.58 | 0.58 | 4,030,000 |
| Solid Group Inc. | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.71 | 0.71 | 260,000 |
| Uniwide Holdings Inc. | 0.36 | 0.37 | 0.36 | 0.36 | 1,300,000 |
| Wellex Industries Inc. | 0.49 | 0.49 | 0.49 | 0.49 | 10,000 |
| Waterfront Phils. Inc. | 0.3 | 0.31 | 0.3 | 0.31 | 1,200,000 |
| **MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING** | | | | | |
| Active Alliance Inc. | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.73 | 10,000 |
| A Brown Company Inc. | 0.6 | 0.6 | 0.55 | 0.55 | 120,000 |
| Corro-Coat Inc. | 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 1.42 | 75,000 |
| Matsushita Elec Phil Corp | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5,000 |
| Music Corporation | 2.95 | 2.95 | 2.95 | 2.95 | 101,000 |
| Mabuhay Vinyl Corp. | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 50,000 |
| Central Azucar Don Pedro | 0.91 | 0.91 | 0.91 | 0.91 | 140,000 |
| SPI Technologies Inc. | 12.5 | 13 | 12.5 | 12.75 | 1,443,300 |
| Steniel Manufacturing | 0.56 | 0.56 | 0.56 | 0.56 | 10,000 |
| **HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE** | | | | | |
| Belle Corp. | 0.58 | 0.6 | 0.58 | 0.59 | 1,150,000 |
| Fairmont Holdings Inc. | 0.71 | 0.72 | 0.69 | 0.71 | 18,090,000 |
| Leisure & Resorts Corp. | 0.68 | 0.68 | 0.67 | 0.67 | 150,000 |
| Manila Jockey Club | 18 | 18.5 | 18 | 18.5 | 6,100 |
| Philippine Racing Club | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 4.4 | 24,000 |
| **BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS** | | | | | |
| ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr) | 47 | 47 | 46.5 | 46.5 | 126,000 |
| Equitable PCI Bank-War | 3.75 | 3.75 | 3.75 | 3.75 | 2,000 |
| Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr) | 730 | 730 | 725 | 725 | 1,040 |
| Jollibee Warrants | 11.75 | 11.75 | 11.75 | 11.75 | 10,000 |
| PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10.25 | 1,200 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series V | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10.25 | 1,600 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series X | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10.25 | 100 |
| PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10.25 | 10.25 | 1,600 |
| **PROPERTY** | | | | | |
| Ayala Land Inc. | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.3 | 6.4 | 3,496,000 |
| Cebu Holdings Inc. | 0.41 | 0.41 | 0.41 | 0.41 | 50,000 |
| C & P Homes Inc. | 0.33 | 0.33 | 0.32 | 0.32 | 240,000 |
| Cyber Bay Corp. | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 0.4 | 160,000 |
| Empire East Land Inc. | 0.41 | 0.41 | 0.41 | 0.41 | 1,800,000 |
| Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc. | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1,000 |
| Filinvest Land Inc. | 2.8 | 2.8 | 2.75 | 2.75 | 2,269,000 |
| SM Development Corp. | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 200,000 |
| SM Prime Holdings Inc. | 7 | 7 | 6.9 | 6.9 | 3,084,000 |
| Universal Rightfield Prop | 0.115 | 0.115 | 0.11 | 0.11 | 4,680,000 |
| **MINING** | | | | | |
| Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 1.7 | 50,000 |
| Itogon-Suyoc Mines A | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.015 | 0.015 | 1,000,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. A | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 3,000,000 |
| Manila Mining Corp. B | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 0.006 | 65,000,000 |
| Omico Corp. | 0.0044 | 0.0044 | 0.0042 | 0.0042 | 96,000,000 |
| Philex Mining Corp. A | 0.22 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 0.22 | 150,000 |
| United Paragon Mining Co. | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 0.14 | 200,000 |
| **OIL** | | | | | |
| Imperial Res. | 0.029 | 0.029 | 0.029 | 0.029 | 2,000,000 |
| Oriental Pet. & Min. B | 0.005 | 0.005 | 0.005 | 0.005 | 23,000,000 |
| The Philodrill Corp. B | 0.21 | 0.21 | 0.21 | 0.21 | 300,000 |
| Vulcan Ind'l | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 0.24 | 20,000 |

| | SHARES | VALUE (P) |
|---|---|---|
| Banks & Fin Svc | 971,930 | 71,014,980.00 |
| Comm'l & Ind'l | 513,001,000 | 187,850,795.00 |
| PRO | 15,980,000 | 51,811,650.00 |
| Mining | 165,400,000 | 973,200.00 |
| OIL | 25,320,000 | 240,800.00 |
| GRAND TOTALS : | 720,672,930 | 311,891,425.00 |

| AVERAGES | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Banks & Fin Svc | 619.84 | UP | 3.58 |
| Comm'l & Ind'l | 2,174.19 | DOWN | 6.52 |
| PRO | 621.55 | DOWN | 14.49 |
| Mining | 1,299.47 | DOWN | 14.20 |
| OIL | 1.91 | DOWN | 0.01 |
| All Shares Index | 776.93 | UP | 1.38 |
| Composite | 1,603.85 | DOWN | 7.62 |

NO. OF ADVANCES: 21; NO. OF DECLINES: 43; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 44; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 108; NO. OF TRADES: 2,099

## DISCLOSURES

THE FOLLOWING are the members of the nomination and election committee of the **Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.**: Rodolfo Cruz (HK Securities Inc.), Leonides Tiotuico (Imperial de Guzman, Abalos & Co. Inc.) and Alejandro Yu (RS Lim & Co. Inc.). They will be in charge of the general conduct of the election of its board of governors in its annual stockholders' meeting on March 10, at the PSE Tektite trading floor.

* * *

**UNICAPITAL Securities Inc.** submitted the name of Leonardo Arguelles as its corporate nominee to the **Philippine Stock Exchange Inc.** vice Rodrigo Lara.

* * *

**UNION Cement Corp.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 19, 5 p.m., at the Shangri-La Hotel, Makati City. The record date is March 20.

* * *

THE ANNUAL shareholders' meeting of **Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.** will be held on April 19, 2:30 p.m., at the Shangri-La Hotel, Makati City. The record date is March 20.

* * *

LAWYER Christina Reside resigned as director of **MBf Inc.** and was replaced by lawyer Maria Cristina Samson.

* * *

**SOUTH China Resources Inc.** has moved to 3/F Low Rise Pacific Star Bldg., Makati City. It may be temporarily contacted at 840-0808 locals 2105, 2107 and 2114 (fax).

* * *

**BANCO Filipino Savings and Mortgage Bank** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 10, 5 p.m., at the 9th floor, BF Bldg., Makati City. The record date is March 16.

* * *

**BOGO-MEDELLIN Milling Co. Inc.** received information about the demise of its non-resident director Harry Hanson. His replacement will be elected in the forthcoming annual stockholders' meeting on April 3. ***Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research***

## CURRENCIES

Mar. 7, 2001

| Country | Unit | Euro Equivalent | Foreign currency in US$ | Foreign currency in Peso |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 1.070091 | 1.000000 | 47.6660 |
| Japan | Yen | 0.009004 | 0.008414 | 0.4011 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1.570144 | 1.467300 | 69.9403 |
| Hong Kong | Dollar | 0.137194 | 0.128208 | 6.1112 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 0.649327 | 0.606796 | 28.9235 |
| Canada | Dollar | 0.695768 | 0.650195 | 30.9922 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 0.609391 | 0.569476 | 27.1446 |
| Australia | Dollar | 0.553877 | 0.517598 | 24.6718 |
| Bahrain | Dinar | 2.838589 | 2.652661 | 126.4417 |
| Kuwait | Dinar | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Saudi Arabia | Rial | 0.285327 | 0.266638 | 12.7096 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 0.607557 | 0.567762 | 27.0629 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 0.000108 | 0.000101 | 0.0048 |
| Thailand | Baht | 0.024662 | 0.023047 | 1.0986 |
| UAE | Dirham | 0.291356 | 0.272272 | 12.9781 |
| Korea | Won | 0.000849 | 0.000793 | 0.0378 |
| Euro | Euro | 1.000000 | 0.934500 | 44.5439 |
| Germany | Mark | 0.511292 | 0.477802 | 22.7749 |
| France | Franc | 0.152450 | 0.142464 | 6.7907 |
| Netherlands | Guilder | 0.453781 | 0.424058 | 20.2131 |
| Austria | Schilling | 0.072673 | 0.067913 | 3.2371 |
| Belgium | Franc | 0.024790 | 0.023166 | 1.1042 |
| Italy | Lire | 0.000517 | 0.000483 | 0.0230 |
| Finland | Markka | 0.168188 | 0.157172 | 7.4918 |
| Portugal | Escudo | 0.004988 | 0.004661 | 0.2222 |
| Spain | Peseta | 0.006010 | 0.005616 | 0.2677 |
| Luxemburg | Franc | 0.024790 | 0.023166 | 1.1042 |
| Ireland | Punt | 1.269738 | 1.18657 | 56.5590 |

# MOTORING

CESAR D. MANGAWANG, Editor

# Ex-military rebel to rev up LTO

TEXT AND PHOTO BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

CAN we safely shout out now "Hail to the chief"?

An immense power lies on someone that the motoring public entrusts its roads and land transport system on. After all, radical problems such as "rolling coffins," poisonous smoke belchers, killer drivers and widespread corruption require revolutionary ideas, doesn't it?

The former leader of the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa, retired Brig. Gen. Edgardo Abenina, has recently been designated the "chief driver" of the Land Transportation Office. From Day One, Abenina was already expected to inject his own dose of revolutionary ideas to rev up an agency seen as immersed in corruption. Now, three weeks into office, he has sketched rough plans to improve the quality of pedestrians' and motorists' life in the country.

Just recently, the LTO announced it was minimizing motorists' direct transactions with the agency by the end of March. He ordered payments or dues to the LTO be coursed through LTO-accredited banks. Initially, transactions would only be made with the Land Bank of the Philippines. He also ordered a cutdown in driver's license processing from 11 decision points to just an entry and exit point as the LTO computerizes its systems.

Another Abenina plan is to have all applicant drivers' training formalized. Only drivers coming from government-accredited vocational driving schools and private driving schools would be accredited by the LTO.

As the issuance of drivers' licenses will be computerized, Abenina said there are plans the agency will authorize government driving schools and established private training schools. These agencies would certify applicants for drivers' licenses. Will this system impose a certain responsibility on the training schools? Abenina said that the result of this project would be the ultimate judge.

"For the first six months of driving on the streets, if this new driver becomes involved in an accident due to lack of technical skills and knowledge, it will be a mutual and corresponding responsibility of the training school and the driver."

Asked how he would treat drivers who acquired licenses through illegal means, Abenina said renewal of their licenses would not be that easy. There is still a gray area on this matter, he said, as he is still figuring out how to solve this issue. He said these problems

ABENINA

don't have overnight solutions.

On top of the drivers' licenses, the responsibility in clearing up cities from smoke belchers is another priority. The LTO, he said, should be an agent of change—freeing the country from "irresponsible motorists contributing in making toxic fumes and poisonous air."

Abenina cited "rolling coffins" in the country and the businessmen who bring them in. He described the Philippines as a victim of greedy businessmen who import secondhand, smoke-belching vehicles.

"They invest on vehicles that either kill with toxic fumes that they emit, or with poorly maintained secondhand vehicles that lose brakes and careen out of control." Abenina observed that the public allowed the country to be a dumping ground for substandard vehicles.

"Each Filipino should examine his or her conscience. *Ang ginawa ng Pilipinong nagtataksil sa bansa ay pumapatay ng kapwa Pilipino. Mga* businessmen *na* involved *sa mga* equipment *na nakakasira sa kapaligiran. Bumibili ng* secondhand equipment. *Pagdating dito sila pa ang mananakot sa mga* law enforcers (Filipinos who are traitors to this country are businessmen involved in purchasing many equipment that destroy the environment. These people even have the gall to threaten law enforcers.)," he said.

Abenina also cited that one time, there was an apprehended vehicle that emitted a 94-percent positive pollutant. Abenina related that the owner even asked the enforcers, "Why are you apprehending me? I am the cousin of this secretary, if you want you can call up Malacañang!"

"How can we enforce the law when even relatives of government officials are violators?" he said.

As a sectoral body of the Department of Transportation and Communications, the LTO also deputizes and trains people from the Metro Manila Development Authority, the local government units (LGUs) and the nongovernment organizations (NGOs) in the apprehension, testing and adjudication of smoke belching motor vehicles

The LTO is a supervisory and administrative body that should implement the traffic laws all over the country—as mandated by Republic Act 4136. This was passed into law in 1964. Abenina said, however, that the law does not state that the LTO should be organized like a line agency—an agency that works and performs duties in the field or an agency that goes out to implement what it administers. Abenina added that the LTO's function right now is to "stay in the office, register vehicles and issue licenses."

"What the drivers do and how the vehicles travel cannot be enforced by LTO because the LTO doesn't have any personnel to do it. The motorcycle-riding LTO personnel called the flying squad in Metro Manila is composed only of 47 staff members. The moment the flying squad leaves the road, traffic violations return," he said.

Again, will it be hail to the LTO chief this time? Leave it to Filipino motorists and pedestrians who will be the ultimate judge.

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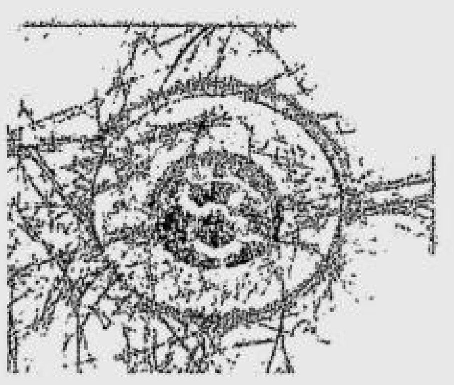

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MON.-FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) / SATURDAY (8 AM - 3 PM)

## Prolonging the life of your battery

ONE of the most essential parts of a vehicle is its battery. Primarily used to start the engine, it is also used to filter and provide extra power for ignition, lighting and other accessories. Located under the bonnet, the battery like everything else in a vehicle needs regular care to function well.

Isuzu Philippines Corp., "your responsible partner," gives out some tips on how to economize through regular and easy-does-it maintenance for your vehicle's battery.

Although push-starting your vehicle is a tried and tested solution for a "dead" battery, it is but temporary and cannot be carried on for long. Maintaining your vehicle's battery is a must for it to last at least two years.

The first thing to do is to make a physical check of the battery regularly. You should look for a cracked or bulged case or cover; signs of electrolyte leakage; frayed insulation on battery cables; corrosion buildup on terminals and posts; and loose or missing holding hardware. Any physical damage to the battery like broken and damaged cables indicates it must be replaced.

High temperatures and frequent discharges of the battery are two factors that are mainly responsible for your battery's short life.

Summer is fast approaching and it is important to remember that hot weather is tough on batteries. As much as possible try to park in the shade. Though there may be few extreme cases wherein batteries will blow up at a high temperature, all batteries are proven to be damaged by the heat. The battery's capacity to give out power will be reduced thus leading to its short life.

But then again, cold weather does not necessarily mean a happy and longer life for your battery. Cold weather makes it sluggish because the chemical reaction in the battery that produces the electricity slows down in the cold. The engine is also harder to start because the oil is stiffer in the cold.

Besides the weather, there are other factors at hand that will lead to your battery's brief life span. Using the lights, radio, aircon and other accessories in your vehicle while it is parked may lead to the frequent discharges of the battery.

## New telephone numbers for BMW service center

PRESTIGE Cars Makati Inc., the sole authorized BMW Sales and Service Center in Makati, has acquired new telephone numbers for its 24-hour roadside assistance fleet of Servicemobils.

Just call up 892-9630 or cell phone 0917-892-9630 and you will receive immediate, on-site service 24 hours a day, 365 days a year within the Metro Manila area. BMW owners outside Manila may also call the said numbers and gain access to a Servicemobil by appointment.

The Prestige Servicemobils have been assisting BMW owners since 1996 and to date, remain as the only in-house, 24-hour roadside assistance service available for vehicles in the luxury car segment.

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## CHEVROLET ZAFIRA

# American brand, German quality

TEXT AND PHOTO
BY VERNON B. SARNE

THE ZAFIRA is branded Chevrolet here and Vauxhall in the United Kingdom. But it's actually Opel, the German carmaker known for first-rate sedans and wagons. The Zafira, in fact, shares underpinnings with the Opel Astra wagon. It is only logical that GM Automobiles Phils. would rebadge the Zafira as a Chevrolet, as the Opel brand already has wagon versions of the Omega, the Vectra and the Astra.

A quick inspection of the Zafira's build quality—both exterior and interior—immediately betrays its Teutonic lineage. There is nothing Yank here. The body is solidly built, with the doors shutting firmly and with an arrogant thud. Speaking of the doors, by the way, short people may have some difficulty closing the tailgate. But it shouldn't take away from the car's sturdy look, feel and sound. The controls and gauges are laid out in the simplest way possible. Very ergonomic. Or very Opel, you might say. It even has Opel's arduous knob for reclining the front seats.

With the Zafira's height and hence generous legroom, each one of the seven seats is literally the best seat in the house. The driver and the front passenger, however, own the best view. The broad windshield and excellent road visibility create a bubbletop effect, greatly increasing your sensitivity to what's happening around the vehicle. The spaciousness and the elevated ride actually give the illusion of large dimensions. In reality, the Zafira is almost just as long as the Honda City. Even the Ford Lynx is longer. What this means is very good maneuverability and, well, ease in parallel parking.

Only one engine is available for the Zafira here: A 1.8-liter, 16-valve Ecotec powerplant with catalytic converter mated to a 4-speed automatic drivetrain. This 115-horsepower motor may not guarantee spirited driving, but it has more than enough kick and pulling power to impel a very versatile wagon.

CHEVROLET Zafira

The Zafira's greatest strengths are its very German steering and superbly controlled suspension. If you want a compact wagon with the road manners of a big, long-wheelbase vehicle, you definitely can't go wrong with the Zafira. It exhibits very minimal body lean when cornering. Pitching motions, too, are never a problem.

One selling point of the Zafira is its so-called Flex7 seating system, which enables you to configure the vehicle from a seven-seater to a single-seater faster than you can recline the driver's seat. With collapsible second- and third-row seats, you can transport everything from a mountain bike to a surfboard.

Safety features include dual front airbags, antilock brakes and side-impact bars. We only begrudge the absence of a CD player, given the vehicle's price.

The Zafira, a fine wagon stamped with the venerable Chevrolet brand and endowed with excellent German engineering, is priced at P1.265 million. Ride it and you'll know where every peso goes.

### FAST FACTS

**CHEVROLET ZAFIRA**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Type:** | Front-wheel drive 5-door wagon |
| **Engine:** | 1.8-liter 16-valve in-line-4 with catalytic converter |
| **Maximum power:** | 115 hp @ 5,400 rpm |
| **Maximum torque:** | 170 Nm @ 4,000 rpm |
| **Transmission:** | 4-speed automatic |
| **Dimensions (L x W x H):** | 4.32 m x 1.74 m x 1.68 m |
| **Wheelbase:** | 2.69 m |
| **Front suspension:** | Independent wishbone, MacPherson struts, gas-filled shocks |
| **Rear suspension:** | Twist beam, longitudinal arms, gas-filled shocks |
| **Brakes:** | Ventilated discs in front; discs in rear |
| **Safety:** | ABS; dual front airbags; side-impact bars |
| **Wheels and tires:** | 15-inch alloys; 195/60R15 |
| **Seating capacity:** | 7 |
| **Price:** | P1,265,000 |

# Lights that blind

**ON THE ROAD**

*Aida Sevilla-Mendoza*

WHILE in Makati last week, I chanced upon a friend who asked how come some cars have blue taillights. That reminded me of an e-mail I received recently in which a reader asked for a write-up on the proper use of headlights at night.

"I have observed that most of our motorists (mostly taxi drivers) don't know what they are for," this reader who signed his e-mail as "concerned motorist" wrote. He described driving on a highway and encountering the high beamed headlights of a car on the opposite lane. He signaled the other driver to dip his headlights but was ignored. "I myself had a near accident because of this," our concerned motorist said.

Coincidentally, the February 2001 issue of the Philippine Motor Association's newsletter had a short feature article on headlight glare. The PMA observed that as in more developed countries like the United States, the Philippines has been experiencing an increase in the number of motor vehicles sporting brighter headlights and fog lights. "Government regulations on headlights and fog lamps specify the allowed intensity and number of lights to be installed on every vehicle," the PMA said. "The law also states that when approaching an oncoming vehicle, headlights should be switched to a lower beam to avoid headlight glare."

The law referred to is Article IV, Sec. 34 © of Republic Act 4136 or the Land Transportation and Traffic Code: "All motor vehicles shall be equipped with devices for varying the intensity of light, and the driver must dim the headings or tilt the beams downward whenever the vehicle is being operated on well-lighted streets within the limits of cities, municipalities and thickly populated barrios or districts, or whenever such vehicle meets another vehicle on any public highway."

Unfortunately, many motorists, out of ignorance or irresponsibility, disregard this law. Congestion, increased use of high-intensity headlights and the popularity of taller pickup trucks and sport utility vehicles add to the glare problem, the PMA noted. "Headlight glare is a factor in many crashes occurring at night. Drivers are exposed to headlight glare directly from oncoming traffic and from rearview mirrors. Headlights on pickup trucks, vans, sport utility vehicles and heavy trucks line up closely with the eyes of drivers of smaller cars, either through the front windshield or via the rearview mirror."

Moreover, many cars and light trucks now have fog lights installed as standard equipment aside from regular headlights and many of these lights seem to be improperly aimed. So, in addition to headlight glare, motorists are exposed to fog light glare.

The PMA points out that then Land Transportation Office Assistant Secretary Manuel Bruan, clarifying Presidential Decree 96, stated that "Only two fog lamps are allowed up front at a level or lower than the headlights with a maximum of 100 watts power each for use in mountainous and foggy areas. These shall be covered when the vehicle is operating in well-lighted areas where visibility is far and wide."

The problem is that many motorists driving in well-lighted areas in Metro Manila and other urban centers, far from covering their fog lamps, use them indiscriminately as if to flaunt them and to intimidate lesser-equipped cars. In our country, fog lamps are not bought and installed for use in mountainous and foggy areas—they're used as status symbols everywhere.

The PMA adds that if your vehicle already has two fog lamps, it is illegal to install more unless you replace the existing ones with a new pair. Yet we often see pickup trucks with fog lamps mounted on top of the roof or the roll bar aside from those already installed as standard equipment. This violates two regulations. First, there are two fog lamps too many and second, the level of the additional fog lamps is higher than the headlights.

As for taillights that are blue or white instead of red and front park/signal lights painted red, I know that the Land Transportation and Traffic Code requires every motor vehicle to have two headlights with white or yellowish light visible from the front but no red lights shall be visible forward or ahead of the vehicle. In addition, every motor vehicle and trailer shall also have on each side in the rear a lamp showing a red light. The Land Transportation Code is silent on white or blue taillights. Perhaps it should be updated to specifically ban white, blue and any color of taillights other than red.

Using glare-prevention glasses is not only an effective counter-glare measure, it makes driving at night safer. I never go driving at night without my Ray-Ban Chromax driving glasses.

* * *

**TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER:** Cynics are people who know the price of everything and the value of nothing

* * *

*E-mail comments to aida_sevilla @pacific.net.ph*

**NISSAN SENTRA EXALTA WINNER**
Businesswoman Loida Cudel, right, receives the car keys of a brand-new Nissan Sentra Exalta from Joseph Esmundo and Teresita Ramos, officials of Cherry Foodarama during the pioneering retail firm's recent awarding ceremonies. The event commemorated Cherry's 48th anniversary at its Shaw Boulevard branch in Mandaluyong City.

# Silverado Powah at the foot of the Sierra

BY TESSA R. SALAZAR

THE FOOT of the Sierra Madre range was a sight to behold, especially on a Vortec V8 engine outfitted in a full-size pickup. Sans the drizzle that would have otherwise made our trip a bit more slippery, the travel was smooth and, as always, backed with power.

The load included goodies (neatly tucked in the spacious rear bed of the Chevy Silverado 1500 extended cab 4x4) for indigenous children of northeastern Quezon province.

The best passenger compliment went to the rear legrooms, and it was deserved—all 33.7 inches of it. Imagine seating five average-sized Filipino gals in the rear alone, for the entire trip to Infanta, and back.

The big Silverado eased through 45-degree angles while traversing the mountainous path to Infanta. Four-wheel antilock disc brakes, an adjustable tilt-wheel steering column, automatic transmission and driving visibility made my driving to and from Sierra Madre comfortable. No amount of pleading from other drivers (male ones, take note) in my group could convince me to give up the helm even for a brief moment.

Of course, traveling wouldn't be complete without electronically tuned AM/FM stereo with a CD player and six premium speakers.

And, what do you know, I even had a crash course on replacing a flat tire. It took me a few minutes to figure things out, though. But it was all well worth it. We reached the kids when the sun was still up, and that made our day.

HUMAN baggage shot of the campers. Spot the celebrity, please!
CHARLES BUBAN

# Auto Plus Sportzentrium breaks 10-second barrier

PHILIPPINE drag racing history was made on Saturday at the Battle of the Bay organized by the Philippine Drag Racing Federation. Speculations ran high as to which team would earn the bragging rights as the first to run a 10-second quarter mile in the country.

The 10-second barrier remained elusive for many months even as more and more teams fielded cars capable of 11-second runs. On Saturday, the dream was realized and the prestige and honor of being the first to run 10 seconds went to team Auto Plus Sportzentrium with their turbocharged Honda Civic Hatchback.

The '96 Civic Hatchback owned by Richard Tan was driven by Auto Plus Team leader and driver Raymond Go. Armed with a turbocharged 1.8-liter type-R Honda engine modified and tuned by Auto Plus Sportzentrium, it was no wonder the record was within their grasp.

The day began with the team running consistent mid to low 11-second runs, culminating with victory in the "Quick 8" class with a best time of 11.079 seconds at 127.11 mph. The team was confident since each pass brought quicker and faster times, thanks to the painstaking preparation and teamwork of Go and the rest of the crew.

Their reward came in the "All Turbo" category where Go drove his best time to date of 10.866 seconds at 135.13 mph. Proving it was no fluke, this was backed up by 10.869 and 10.920 runs at 135.13 mph and 134.72 mph, respectively.

Auto Plus Sportzentrium is the country's exclusive distributor of Japanese high-performance parts from Tanabe, 5Zigen, Spoon, APEXi, Sard, kg/mm, volk racing and work wheels. No stranger to winning, the team has distinguished itself with record-breaking victories in circuit racing as well as drag racing.

The company is at present moving to their new and larger showroom located at 219 E. Delos Santos Avenue in Mandaluyong City. Their new premises will be equipped with the Philippines' first and only dynojet 4-wheel dynamometer capable of measuring up to 1,800 actual horsepower at the wheels.

# Yuchengco Group dominates Honda dealership awards

THE HONDA-YUCHENGCO Group bagged all the eight major category awards in the recently held recognition ceremonies organized by Honda Cars Philippines Inc. for its franchised dealerships. This completes the winning streak of the Yuchengco Honda dealership for the year 2000.

Honda Cars Quezon City Inc. won the first place in six out of eight major categories, including: Post Service Survey Program, After-sales Service Contest, Prompt Payment Award, Best in Customer Relations, Service Dealer of the Year and Top Selling Dealer Award. Honda Cars Kalookan Inc. won the Parts Highest Sales Attainment while Honda Cars Manila was adjudged Parts Dealer of the Year.

Arnold Bergola, a service technician from Honda Cars Quezon City, won first place in the 6th International Honda Technician's Contest. Bergola became the first Filipino to win in this "Honda Olympics" in Asia.

# Citra on e-Pass; Honda's F1 commitment

**FULL TANK**

*Al S. Mendoza*

THE NO. 1 question being received by Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp. regarding the e-Pass is: "If you are so sold on e-Pass as the solution to the traffic problem, then why don't you just give the e-Pass for free? I see the motivation to sell e-Pass is more out of greed."

Citra's answer:

"The cost of the tag (P2,000) and the cost of running the Customer Service Center are not part of the tolls. Right now, with the exchange rate that is substantially over our initial $26-P1 investment cost, the present tolls are not even enough to cover our investments and day-to-day operations.

"We admit that in the long run, when our toll plazas have become fully electronic, there will be savings on the operations of the toll road. But we don't see that happening until such time that practically all the users of the Skyway System and SLE are e-Pass holders and are disciplined enough to replenish their e-Pass accounts on time. Then, we can have nonstop, barrier-less e-Pass lanes and a fully automated toll booth.

"In the meantime, the PNCC Skyway Corp. has announced that it has waived the annual renewal fee on the e-Pass tag. We are also talking to prospective sponsors to keep the cost of subscribing to the e-Pass to a minimum. Just like the Shell Citibank MasterCard where the e-Pass tag first-year fee is free for every approved application, in addition to the free tag lease subsidized by Pilipinas Shell. This will only be for 35,000 tags, of which about 31,000 have been issued or allocated to the Shell stations."

So there.

* * *

**In Australia, ID-carrying residents of nearby freeways are allowed free use of the freeways. However, nonresidents passing through a freeway will have to pay the required toll.**

**Can we not adopt that here?**

* * *

An exciting new era dawns for Honda's Formula 1 program in 2001 as the world's largest engine manufacturer has extended supply of its advanced V10 power plants to two teams, Jordan Grand Prix and British American Racing. Both teams had been given identical specification called "works" Honda RA001E engines.

After powering BAR Honda into the Top 5 in the 2000 Constructors' Championship, Honda's increased commitment to Grand Prix racing in 2001 underlines the company's avowed intention to achieve success at the pinnacle of world motorsport.

By joining forces with two of the leading teams, Honda has affirmed its long-term ambition to re-establish itself as the leading engine manufacturer in Formula 1.

I have seen Honda's hi-tech laboratory in Los Angeles some years back. I salivated upon seeing the F1 engines there.

* * *

**Four top drivers will benefit from "Honda Power" this season, doubling the company's opportunities to capitalize on the high performance of its latest breed of F1 engine.**

**"Supplying engines to Jordan and BAR represents a new challenge in Honda's third period of participation in F1," said Takeo Fukui, senior managing and representative director of Honda Motor Co. Ltd. "We want to win one race at least in 2001 and now that we have four drivers, I should hope that we will be able to achieve this."**

**With Jordan and BAR enjoying equal status within the Honda fold for 2001, the competition between the two teams will be intense.**

**As both will be using identical engines, the performance of each team will act as a benchmark for the other.**

**"We think that this sense of healthy competition will benefit Honda's long-term objective," said Shoichi Tanaka, president of the Honda Racing Development.**

**"The first target for each team will be to beat the other and this will encourage a constant drive for greater performance. As a result, Honda hopes to close the gap to the leading teams and be in a position to challenge for race wins as soon as possible. We will maintain absolute neutrality in terms of engine performance and both teams will benefit from the developments we make in the course of the season."**

**Even as defending champion Michael Schumacher captured the first leg in Melbourne in a race marred by the death of a marshal following a collision of two drivers, the F1 season has just begun. Schu will need a lot of spunk to make it a rare back-to-back triumph.**

**Honda is undaunted and Jordan Grand Prix team owner Eddie Jordan acknowledges how important it is for his team to have the benefit of "Honda Power."**

**"Securing Honda engines for Jordan Grand Prix is a massive breakthrough," he said. "To have the support and commitment of Honda gives renewed credibility to our ambitions to win the world championship."**

**Honda's exclusive collaboration with British American Racing on chassis technology will continue as before as Honda investigates the comprehensive development of complete cars. Already recognized as a world leader in terms of engine technology, Honda is keen to develop its knowledge of total chassis management.**

**Craig Pollock is confident that the experience of 2000 will help his BAR team improve still further in 2001.**

**"Honda and BAR spent last season learning how to work with each other; we made good progress and will build on this in the coming season," he said. "In addition, we have the added incentive of working with Honda on the chassis program, so we are very optimistic about this year."**

**Good luck.**

* * *

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TRAINING VENUE DUSIT HOTEL

National Power Corporation

**INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID AD NO. PD 2001-14**

**Rebidding Date: March 16, 2001 - 10:00 AM**

| | |
|---|---|
| PB010202-T3JR5783 | WELDING ELECTRODE |
| PB010226-T3JR5859 | PAINT/PRESS BOARD/SEALANT/PENETRATING OIL |
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| PB010226-T3JR5863 | SPORTS UNIFORM for GCAA Duckpin/Tennis Tournament with NPC and GCAA logo |

****Bidding Date: March 26, 2001**

| | |
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| 2001-14-02 | DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMER, 25 KVA, Single Phase, 60 cycle |
| 2001-14-03 | WELDING ELECTRODE/FILLER METAL |
| 2001-14-04 | SHAFTING BAR, 125 mm x 3 m L |
| 2001-14-05 | PRINTER HEAD for Datamax Prodigy Plus |
| 2001-14-06 | SAFETY MATERIALS (Working Clothes, Shoes, Safety Caps, Air Filled Ear Plugs) |

Interested parties are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Room, Ground Floor, Building 2, NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue corner Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Accreditation forms can be obtained from Mondays thru Fridays at the Accreditation and Bidding Support Services, Materials Management Department, Ground Floor, Building 2 upon payment of P50.00. submission of company's TIN and proof of listing at the telephone directory. **Deadline for submission of duly accomplished forms on March 15, 2001.

Bidding documents available on March 8, 2001 upon payment of P50.00 which is non-refundable, presentation of original Certificate of Accreditation and supplier's number (DCE). **Last day of issuance of bidding documents March 21, 2001.

Issuance of accreditation forms and bidding documents mornings only, 8:30 AM to 11:30 AM. For inquiries please call no. 921-25-74.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
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(PDI -- Mar. 7,8 & 9, 2001)

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### LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of **MARIA BERNARDINO** was extrajudicially settled by her heirs per Doc. No. 83; Page No. 17; Book No. I; Series of 1998 of Not. Pub. Arlene Carbon of Taytay, Rizal (PDI-Mar. 1, 8, & 15, 2001)

### NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given of the lost S2 Lic. 132788 in the Name of Dra. Josephine Bernardo

Notice is hereby given that **Stock Cert. #5933 of Centro Escolar Univ.** issued in the name of Mamerta B. Felizardo have been reported lost. PDI-March 1, 8 & 15, 2001

Notice is hereby given of the lost S2 Lic. 013655 in the Name of Ma. Rosario P. Javier

### PERSONAL

THANK YOU ST. JUDE for All the Blessings from Marissa Cabaltera

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
Department of Transportation and Communications
LAND TRANSPORTATION FRANCHISING AND REGULATORY BOARD
East Avenue, Quezon City

Application for Extension
of Validity to operate a
TH freight-truck service.

TOWER FREIGHT SERVICES INC.,
Rep. By: CECILIA C. BELGADO,
Applicant/s.
CASE NO. 95-24582

x------------------------------------------x

**NOTICE OF HEARING**

Applicant is a grantee of a Certificate of Public Convenience to operate a TH freight-truck service within MAKATI CITY and from said place to any point in the Island of Luzon accessible to motor vehicle traffic and vice versa, with the use of SIX (6) units, which Certificate is valid up to JANUARY 09, 2001. In the application filed on JANUARY 10, 2001, applicant requests authority to extend the validity of the said Certificate within the same territory, with the use of the same number of units.

NOTICE is hereby given that this application will be heard by this Board on MARCH 13, 2001 at 1:00 p.m. at its Office at the above address.

At least five (5) days prior to the above date, applicant/s shall publish this Notice once in one (1) daily newspaper of general circulation in Luzon.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written oppositions supported by documentary evidence on or before the above date furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant/s and may if they so, desire appear on said date and time.

This application will be acted upon by this Board on the basis of its records and documentary evidence submitted by the parties, unless the Board deems it necessary to receive additional documentary and/ or oral evidence.

WITNESS Honorable DANTE M. LANTIN, this 1st day of MARCH 2001.

(Sgd.) GONZALO S. GO, JR.
*Chief, Legal Division*

GSG./erb
COPY FURNISHED:
Applicant - AFCI Bldg., Kaingin Rd., Multinational Vill., Prñq., City
Counsel - Atty. Charlton Jules P. Romero

(PDI--March 8, 2001)

# 5 IT zones get Peza OK

**By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.**

THE PHILIPPINE Economic Zone Authority has agreed to grant information technology park status to five industrial estate and building projects in Metro Manila and Cebu with a development cost of roughly P70 billion.

This was revealed yesterday by Peza Director General Lilia de Lima who said investments in economic zones surged by 227 percent to P12.6 billion in the first two months of the year from P3.8 billion in the same period last year. This continued the spectacular rise in Peza investments which doubled to P74 billion last year.

The five projects that were granted IT park status by Peza are Robinson's Cyberpark in Mandaluyong; Filinvest Asia Corp.'s PBCom Tower in Makati; Bases Conversion Development Authority's Bonifacio Information Special Technology Zone in Taguig; Cebu Property Ventures and Development Corp.'s Cebu Civic and Trade Center (CCTC) in Lapu-Lapu City; and First Centro Inc.'s Cebu Cybertown IT Park in Cebu City. So far, only CCTC has been approved by Malacañang.

Under a recent Peza policy, developers of these IT parks would not be entitled to Peza incentives as only their locators would be eligible. Incentives in IT parks include income tax breaks, preferred duties on capital equipment imports, and 5-percent tax on gross income.

These projects would push to nine the number of IT parks that have been approved by Peza. The first four projects were Eastwood City Cyberpark of Megaworld Properties and Holdings Inc.; E-Square Information Technology Park of Fort Bonifacio Development Corp.; Northgate Cyberzone of the Filinvest Group; and RCBC Plaza IT Park of RCBC Realty Corp. Except for RCBC Plaza, developers of these IT parks were allowed to avail of incentives having been approved before the adoption of the new Peza policy on incentives.

De Lima said the surge in number of IT park projects and investments in economic zones showed a "perceptible, renewed interest in our country especially with the new Macapagal administration."

# Creditors take over VMC, name new COO

VICTORIAS CITY—The creditor banks of Victorias Milling Co. are assuming, 70 percent ownership of the largest sugar mill in Asia located 33 kilometers north of Bacolod as it installed yesterday Arthur Aguilar as the company's chief operating officer.

"We want to assure everybody that Victorias Milling will be business as usual. There will be no major changes in its policies," Gerry Anonas, acting chair of the VMC management committee, said yesterday.

He said Aguilar has been tasked to ensure a smooth transition in the company's management so that operations of VMC would not be adversely affected by the changes.

"The mancom is here with the intention to rehabilitate Victorias milling," he said, pointing out that VMC's creditor banks are now the company's biggest stakeholders.

They will hold eight of the 11 seats of the VMC board.

Aguilar assumed the post by virtue of a Securities and Exchange Commission's ruling denying a petition that sought a temporary restraining order against the appointment of VMC's new COO.

The SEC also said there was a need for the mancom to appoint a COO because of the resignation of Manuel Mañalac as president/CEO, member of the SEC-appointed mancom and VMC director effective Jan. 31, 2001.

The SEC order stated that the mancom, representing the 32 creditor banks, has the authority to "undertake" the management of VMC, Anonas said.

VMC was unable to pay P4 billion in loans to 32 creditor banks prompting the SEC in August 1997 to create the mancom that took over the management of VMC.

Anonas said VMC's original loan with the banks amounted to only P4 billion but this has ballooned to P6.5 billion due to delays in the implementation of the bank's rehabilitation.

Anonas said that P1.1 billion of VMC debts would be converted to equity and P2.4 million in convertible loans would have to be paid in 15 years.

*Carla P. Gomez*

# PNOC pushing through with naphtha project

**By Ronnel W. Domingo**

PHILIPPINE National Oil Co. chair Sergio F. Apostol said the company would push through with its $600-million naphtha cracker project.

In an interview, Apostol said preparations for the plant site would definitely start on April 8.

PNOC Petrochemical Development Corp., a subsidiary of PNOC, has a 34-percent stake in the naphtha project. Eleven other local and foreign investors share the rest.

The former Leyte representative said a financial adviser for the project has already been selected but refused to name the winning company. Those that offered their services for the project include ABN-Amro, Chase Manhattan, Lehman Brothers, Deutsche Bank, Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi, Sumitomo Bank and Bank of America.

Apostol said a memorandum of agreement would be signed shortly by the project proponents and the financial adviser.

The planned naphtha cracker facility will have a capacity of about 450,000 metric tons a year. It will provide raw materials for the country's two polypropylene plants and two polyethylene plants.

The four plants will, in turn, provide raw materials for the production of plastic products.

In a related matter, Apostol said PNOC was not keen on privatizing its subsidiaries. Instead, he said PNOC has been offering to buy the geothermal power plants of the National Power Corp., the state-owned power agency awaiting privatization.

In 1997, then President Fidel V. Ramos approved the sale of 60 percent of the government's stake in PNOC Energy Development Co., PNOC's most profitable subsidiary. The plan, however, did not materialize due to the prevailing economic crunch then.

# World Bank restructures $60-M loan to Subic

**By Tonette Orejas**
*PDI Central Luzon Desk*

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—The Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority has convinced the World Bank to restructure a $60-million loan for a "severely delayed" multi-component project crucial to rev up the conversion of this former American naval base into a premiere economic zone.

The World Bank earlier included the Second Subic Freeport Project (Subic 2) in the list of projects being considered for possible loan cancellation, a Feb. 27 report of the project monitoring committee of the Regional Development Council in Central Luzon said.

The project, covering a water supply project, solid waste management, power distribution, roads and bridges, and institutional strengthening, was approved in 1997 and was supposed to be completed in December last year.

The SBMA has drawn only $6 million from the fund, incurring for the Philippine government a penalty of $300,000 for the 18-month delay in the project implementation.

The base conversion body traced the setbacks to technical and political reasons, including the hostile leadership transition in SBMA in mid-1998.

The World Bank agreed to scale down the project cost to $36 million but lowered the Philippine government's counterpart from 40 percent to 25 percent to meet its objective to convert Subic from a naval base to a civilian industrial enclave, the SBMA said.

Under the restructured loan, all components have been retained except for the solid waste component that has been transferred to another lending agency, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

The World Bank is funding only the construction of test wells in the Pamatawan River of Zambales from where the SBMA plans to derive bulk water supply for the zone in the next 30 years.

The production wells for the water component will be under a new financial package, possibly also by the JBIC.

The RDC feared that the cancellation of Subic 2 would cause "a big setback in building the infrastructure base of Subic which plays as one of the major anchors of the region toward global competitiveness."

Subic 2, according to the RDC, complements the following projects: the Subic Bay Port, Subic-Clark Expressway, Clark International Airport and the North Rail Transit System.

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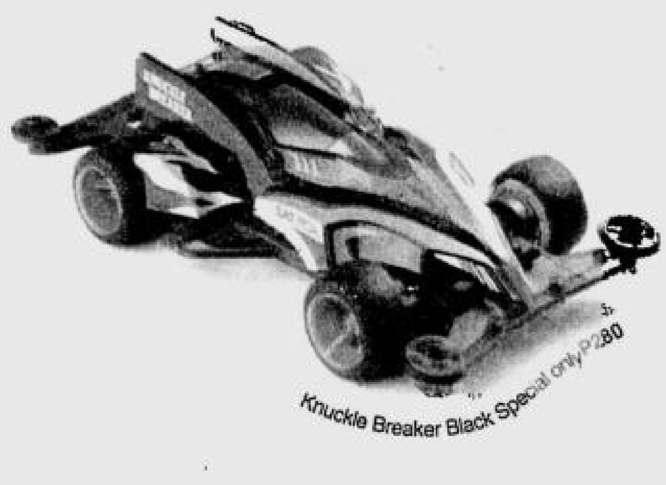

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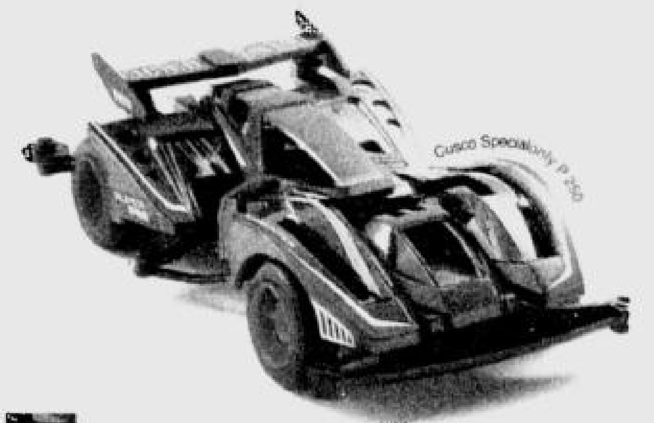

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FOR TROUBLED BANKS

# BSP extends credit facility

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has extended until next month a stand-by credit facility it quietly opened in October last year for banks experiencing cash flow problems.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes said in an interview yesterday the facility was supposed to be available only until last month, but banks requested the BSP to continue making it available until March this year, although no bank had tapped into it.

The central bank opened the stand-by credit facility discretely in October last year to assist banks experiencing huge withdrawals, as depositors began losing confidence in then President Joseph Estrada's administration.

The Senate began an impeachment trial in October following allegations that Estrada took millions of pesos in illegal gambling payoffs. The trial ended abruptly, eventually leading to a public revolt that forced Estrada to step down in January.

Political uncertainties resulting from the trial hit banks like Equitable PCI Bank, which Estrada allegedly used to store money he received from illegal gambling operators.

The country's third biggest bank reportedly lost as much as P40 billion in deposits during the trial.

Reyes said Equitable PCI Bank did not use the BSP's stand-by credit facility, although it did secure a P30 billion through the central bank's repurchase facility to ease its liquidity problems.

The bank reported earlier that since Estrada's ouster, its operations had normalized.

Reyes said the stand-by credit facility was similar to the credit window the central bank introduced in 1999 in light of the "millennium bug" scare.

The stand-by credit facility requires banks to surrender first-class collateral, like government securities and real estate.

The central bank, meanwhile, accredited four external auditors to check on the financial health of commercial and universal banks.

These are SGV & Co.; Joaquin Cunanan, local partner of PricewaterhouseCoopers; Laya Mananghaya, local partner of KPMG; and Guzman Bocaling and Associates.

"This is still a conditional approval as they still need to submit documents. Several applications are still being reviewed subject to Circular 251," Reyes said.

These auditors will check for fraud in the banking system and help the central bank detect early signs of collapsing banks.

Babae ka... may karapatang pumili!

- The right time to have children
- Tamang agwat bawat anak
- Mahalaga ang kalusugan mo
- Dapat shared responsibility ang pagpapamilya

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March 8, 2001
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Ali Sotto
"Babae ka"

talk about women
March 8, 2001
Channels 2,7,9,13 & 23
8:15-8:30 PM

# Globe raises capital stock to ₱12.25B

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE BOARD of Globe Telecom Inc., the telecommunications unit of Ayala Corp., approved Monday the creation of 20 million convertible preferred series B shares to increase its authorized capital stock by P1 billion to P12.25 billion.

The board also approved the issuance of 16 million common shares in one or more offerings or private placements.

In line with the issuance of the new common shares, the board agreed to amend the company's articles of incorporation in order to exempt the new common shares from the pre-emptive rights of existing shareholders.

Based on documents filed by Globe with the Securities and Exchange Commission, each of the 20 million preferred shares to be issued will have a par value of P50 and will feature a call option to be determined by the Globe board at the time of the issuance.

The preferred shares can be converted into common shares under such terms and as the board may also determine upon the issue date. They will also have voting rights and will carry a dividend rate yet to be set by the board.

The board also approved an increase in the number of board seats to 15 from 11. The increase and the issuance of new preferred shares and new common shares would be subject to approval of stockholders during Globe's annual stockholders' meeting on April 2 this year.

Recently, shareholders of Globe and Isla Communications Co. Inc. signed a series of share agreements paving the way for Islacom to become a wholly owned subsidiary of Globe.

Globe's principal shareholders include Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecom International Pte. Ltd. while Islacom's major shareholders include DeTeAsia Holdings GmbH, a wholly owned unit of German telecom giant Deutsche Telekom, and Asiacom Philippines Inc.

# PNOC still set on joining Petron project

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE National Oil Co.'s geothermal subsidiary said yesterday it was still set on taking part in Petron Corp.'s fuel conversion project.

PNOC said it was pursuing the $1.2-trillion project after seeking PNOC Energy Development Corp.'s help in financing the project.

Petron announced last year that it was shelving the project due to funding constraints.

PNOC EDC president and chair Nazario Vasquez said PNOC got into the project because PNOC EDC was capable of borrowing money when Petron was not.

"I asked (Petron) if I could borrow the money and they said 'yes'," Vasquez said in an interview.

Vasquez said the fuel conversion project was Petron's and the oil giant had the right to pursue it on its own if it wanted to.

"It seems that everything is now going well with Petron, and we are amenable to (the idea that it is going through with the project by itself)," he said.

He said, however, that PNOC had yet to receive word from Petron about terminating a previous agreement on PNOC EDC's participation.

The project involves modification of low-priced black by-products of crude refining to high-value light products. This is obtained through the processes of hydrocracking and coking.

Called petroleum coke, the product can be used as a cheap fuel for commercial power plants.

Apart from fuel conversion, the project also has a power-generation component, which will initially have a capacity of 125 megawatts.

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*"I have called you by name—you are mine."*
Isaiah 43:1

## EDMUND GENEROSO BABST

*Died in the Grace of our Lord on March 6, 2001.*

Wife **Socorro** (†); his bereaved daughters **Rosario** and **Miriam**; sisters **Pacita Lopez, Elvira B. Mendoza** (†); brother **Chester G. Babst** (†); and sister-in-law **Agripina P. Babst**; nephews, nieces and grandchildren request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, March 10, 2001 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina after the 9:00 AM Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Bacood, Manila.

---

## ATTY. HONORATA "NOLLY" MARAVILLA ORQUIOLA

of Batan, Aklan and Quezon City

Former Deputy Secretary for Legislation
Senate of the Philippines

*Died in the Grace of our Lord on March 6, 2001, at the age of 79.*

Her loving husband **Atty. Victor V. Orquiola**, sisters, brothers and their spouses **Bebe** and **Engr. Promen** (†) **Buyoc**, **Lucy** and **Ricardo** (†) **Panado**, **Perla** and **Dr. Vic Sicat**, **Ofelia** and **Engr. William** (†) **Delfin**, **Dr. Juan** (†) and **Nenen Maravilla**, **Judge Cezar** (†) and **Nancy Maravilla**, sisters-in-law **Marina** (†) **Sister Mary Roberts** and **Edith Orquiola**; brother-in-law, **Fulgencio** (†), **Cortes**, nephews, nieces, grandnephews, grandnieces, relatives and friends, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Sto. Domingo Mortuary Chapel, Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, March 10, 2001 at Himlayang Pilipino after the 2:00 p.m. Holy Mass at the Sto. Domingo Church.

---

We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death. He will raise us to life with Jesus. He will present us, along with you, to God
Matthew 11:28

---

*...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."*
Genesis 1:3

---

*In His Will is our Peace.*

We Lovingly Remember
The First Death Anniversary of our Dearly Beloved

## ATTY. ALICIA P. CLEMENO

Who returned home in Heaven to her Creator on March 8, 2000

Holy Masses will be offered at the following Churches today, March 8, 2001

| | |
|---|---|
| Sacred Heart Parish, Scout Ybardolaza, Kamuning, Quezon City | 6:00 PM |
| Christ the King Mission Seminary, E. Rodriguez Boulevard, Quezon City | 6:00 AM<br>6:30 PM |
| Our Lady of the Abandoned Church, Sta. Ana, Manila | 6:15 AM |
| Abbey Church of Our Lady of Montserrat, Mendiola Street, Manila | 6:30 AM |
| St. Jude Archdiocesan Shrine, J.P. Laurel Street, Manila | 6:00 AM |
| San Felipe Neri Church, Mandaluyong City | 6:15 AM |
| Naga Metropolitan Cathedral, Naga City | 7:30 AM |
| Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Naga City | 6:30 AM |
| Alliance of Two Hearts Church, Banawa, Cebu City | 6:30 AM |
| Redemptorist Church, Cebu City | 7:00 AM |
| Sacred Heart Church, Jakosalem, Cebu City | 6:00 PM |
| Narcissus Parish Church, Consolacion, Cebu | 6:30 PM |
| Metropolitan Cathedral, Cebu City | 12:15 NN |
| St. Francis Parish Church, Lahug, Cebu City | 12:15 NN |
| Our Lady of Sacred Heart Church, Escario, Cebu City | 12:15 NN |

*The family requests the pious readers to include "Mama Alice" in their prayers.*

---

## SRA. AURORA O. PARDO vda. de ONG KOO

*Peacefully joined our Lord on March 5, 2001 at the age of 88.*

Her children **Rose Ong Carroll**, **Naty and Gary Monk** (Abroad), **Jose and Carmelita Lim** (Abroad), **Aurora**, **Vicente Jr.** (Abroad), **Romeo and Annie Gaw** (Abroad), **Eduardo and Emma Bugarin**; grandchildren **Rose**, **Gordon**, **Chester**, **Jennifer**, **Melanie**, **Ronald**, **Robert**, **Regine**, **Minette**, **Tintin**; great grandchildren **Lauren Chelsea**, **Nicholas Lyon**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, EDSA, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will follow after the 10:00 AM Mass at Santuario de San Antonio Church, Forbes Park, Makati City on March 13, 2001 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque.

---

*"The LORD is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want."*
*Psalm 23*

It has been a year since "*PAPA*"

## ENGR. ANDRES "ANDY" GONZALES BUENDIA

*Sept. 22, 1939 - March 8, 2000*
*of BF Homes, Parañaque and Bauan, Batangas*

*Peacefully left us and we remember him with fond memories as we commemorate his First Death Anniversary today, March 8, 2001.*

*Please join us in praying for the eternal repose of his soul during Holy Mass to be celebrated today at:*

| | |
|---|---|
| Presentation of the Child Jesus Parish<br>*BF Homes, Parañaque City* | 6:00 AM<br>6:45 AM<br>7:00 PM |
| Parish Church of the Ressurection<br>*BF Homes, Parañaque City* | 5:30 AM<br>6:30 AM |
| Sto. Niño Chapel<br>*Greenbelt, Makati City* | 7:15 AM |
| Immaculate Conception Parish<br>*Los Baños, Laguna* | 6:00 AM |
| Holy Rosary Parish<br>*Angeles City* | 5:30 AM<br>6:30 AM<br>7:30 AM<br>8:30 AM<br>5:30 PM |
| Carmelite Monastery<br>*Angeles City* | 6:00 AM |
| Sta. Catalina Parish<br>*Pagbilao, Quezon* | 6:00 AM |

*and on March 9, 2001, at:*

| | |
|---|---|
| Our Lady of Manaoag Parish<br>*Manaoag, Pangasinan* | 9:00 AM |
| Sta. Catalina Parish<br>*Porac, Pampanga* | 9:00 AM |

His wife Rita; children Mon and Ludette, Kei, Rick and Susan and Ryan; grandchildren Paola, Andrew, Andrei, Rikki, and Raymond; brothers and sister extend their sincerest thanks to all those who continue to remember him and include him in their prayers.

---

*"You will forever be in our hearts Daddy."*

## HERMINIO ARO LACSON, Sr.

**Makati City, Bago City, Bacolod, Neg. Occ.**

*Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on March 6, 2001 at the age of 70.*

His loving wife **Evelita**; children **Liza** and **Jun**, **Susan** and **Ferdie**, **Chona**, **Jun** and **Ched**, **Danny** and **En**, **Nancy** and **Erwin**; grandchildren **EJ**, **Jessica**, **Jannina**, **Daniel**, **Angelica**, **Anna**, **Cassie**, **Cathy** and **Macrina** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will follow at the Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, after the 2:00 p.m Mass at Arlington Memorial Chapels.

---

Our Dearly Beloved "INANG"

## AUREA STA. ANA CANSANA

**of Palatiw, Pasig City**

*Peacefully joined her Creator and husband Tirso H. Cansana on March 6, 2001 at the age of 93.*

Her loving children

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Juaning (†) | & | Ben Umali |
| Beny | & | Lina Cansana |
| Miniang | & | Nato Estacio |
| Nards | & | Sol Cansana |
| Atel | & | Lito Mencias |
| Cesar | & | Sony Cansana; |

her grandchildren; great grandchildren; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence at #122 M.H. del Pilar St., Palatiw, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Sunday, March 11, 2001 at the Pasig Catholic Cemetery after 1:00 p.m. Mass at the Parish of Immaculate Conception, Pasig City.

---

## Aristeo R. Ramos, M.D.

*Died on March 5, 2001 at the age of 45.*

Interment today, March 8, 2001 at the North Cemetery after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Sto. Domingo Church.

---

"From darkness let the light shine!"
Genesis 1:3

# CLASSIFIEDS

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
**COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS**
Intramuros, Manila

## INVITATION TO BID

Sealed bids for the supply and delivery to the Commission on Elections of branded computers shall be received at the Session Hall, Commission on Elections, Postigo Street, Intramuros, Manila, on **March 15, 2001** at 2:00 o'clock in the afternoon, at which place, date and time, said sealed bids shall be opened in the presence of the representatives of the Commission on Elections, participating bidders and the public. Bid documents and specifications may be obtained from the Supply Officer V, Property Division, during regular office hours, beginning **March 9, 2001**.

A pre-bid conference shall be held on **March 13, 2001**, 2:00 p.m. at the Session Hall, Commission on Elections, Intramuros, Manila.

Bids shall be accompanied by a Bidder's Bond equivalent to ten per centum (10%) of the offer, bid, tender or quotation, in the form of a cash or manager's check/ cashier's check payable to the "Commission on Elections."

The Commission reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any defect therein or to accept only bids which are most advantageous to the government.

March 6, 2001.

(Sgd.) **MEHOL K. SADAIN**
*Chairman, PBEC*

(PDI – March 8, 2001)

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INQUIRER
## TRiViA
By BONG BARRAMEDA

### Comic relief

The first comic strip was "The Yellow Kid," a panel cartoon that featured a bald, flap-headed boy in a yellow nightshirt, created by Richard Outcault in 1895 for Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World*. It became an instant hit and proved that comics could sell newspapers. When Pulitzer's rival, William Randolph Hearst, lured Outcault and "The Yellow Kid" from the *World* to Hearst's New York *Journal* after a celebrated struggle, a new phrase was born: "yellow journalism," and it came to symbolize the unscrupulous practices of the sensational press.

**For the Record.** The first costumed masked comics hero was *The Phantom*, who made his comic strip debut in 1936, through the collaboration of Lee Falk and Ray Moore. The first comics superheroine was *Wonder Woman*, created by William Marston and H.G. Peter for *All-Star Comics* in 1941.

***Ooops!*** Contrary to popular folk belief, you cannot get warts from handling toads. Although toads do not like to be handled, and probably wish you could get warts from handling them, you can't. Warts are caused by viruses. And keep in mind: the worst thing to do to a wart is to try to cut it out yourself. Besides endangering yourself by using unsterilized instruments, you may reinfect yourself with the virus that caused your wart and start a whole new crop of them.

**WORD WATCH**

**Kalyo** : from the Spanish *callo*, 'callus, corn.'

ATTENTION: *Members of the Electronics Class-Batch '74 of Don Bosco-Makati are getting their act together very soon (about time, guys). Please contact Cesar : "Einstein" Pascual (email: cesarp@rocketmail.com / celfone: 0917-812-7477) or Erny "Cutie Boy" Cleofe (email: emcleofe@unilab.com.ph / celfone: 0917-539-5057), or you'll miss out on all the fun and nostalgia.*

PDI -- March 8, 2001

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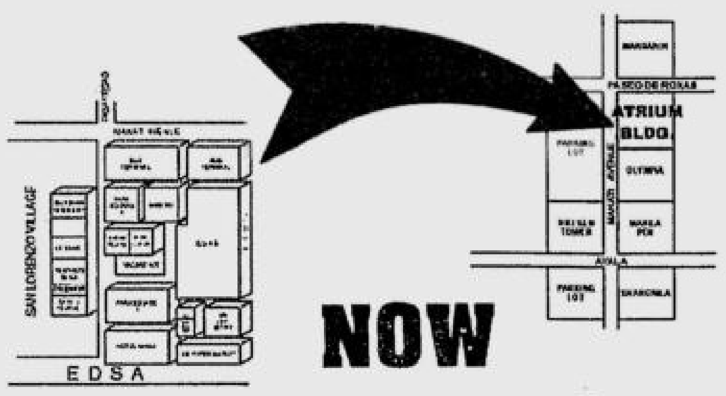
## Inquirer's Makati Branch



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# MEGA DISCON 2001

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**ARIES B. ESPINOSA,** Assistant Editor
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**LITA PASCUAL,** Account Manager

## MESSAGES

MY ESTEEMED greetings to the officers and members of the Rotary International District 3810 as they hold their District Conference dubbed as "Mega Discon 2001."

Socio-civic organizations like the Rotary International are active participants in the process of rebuilding and healing our country. For many years now, we have seen how the Rotary's existence has had a positive impact on the lives of our people. More than providing material and monetary assistance, your organization has succeeded in creating a real difference in the lives of the less fortunate by empowering them to take responsibility for their lives through meaningful projects and interventions.

It is this same spirit of service and cooperation that we hope to strengthen with you as we work together to sustain the process of reform and transformation of our society. While the task of translating the fruits of Edsa II into genuine development for all remains daunting, we remain confident that civil society is ever prepared to perform its role and together, we are capable of succeeding in the face of these challenges.

In this respect, we call upon you to remain supportive of our efforts to institute a transparent, ethical and effective government in this crucial time of nation-building. Let the welfare of our people be the ultimate measure of your achievements and may you always be guided by the interest of the greater number as you plan your projects and program for the year ahead.

More power and *mabuhay kayong lahat!*

**GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO**
President
Republic of the Philippines

I OFFER my warmest felicitations to the officers and members of the Rotary Club of Bagumbayan-Manila as they host this year's District Conference on March 8-10, 2001. As the biggest district activity, the Mega Discon 2001, will surely play a great part in enhancing Rotary Fellowship.

Once again, this most awaited event is expected to harness the club's continuing efforts on various community projects beneficial to the interest of our people. Such initiatives are foreseen to be in line with our relentless pursuit to redevelop Manila under our urban renewal program "Buhayin ang Maynila."

I am optimistic that your sincere desire to become a partner in nation-building will lead you to greater heights. Together let us revitalize our city towards the 21st century. *Mabuhay!*

**LITO ATIENZA**
Mayor
City of Manila

# RI District 3810 - Mega team sets records, honors outstanding services

LEFT: Associate Justice Art Panganiban inducts into office District Governor Charoy Marquez, as his family looks on. Right: Governor Charoy triumphantly raises the Rotary logo as he launches District 3810's battlecry "Go for excellence today and make a difference."

ROTARY International District 3810, the foremost Rotary district in the Philippines, formally opens its three-day annual District Conference today at the Manila Hotel. To welcome the participants is District Governor Richard "Charoy" Marquez who will deliver his State of the District Address this afternoon. The governor will report on numerous accomplishments, including his district's record-breaking growth in membership and chartering of new clubs. In just eight months, 28 new Interact Clubs, 14 Rotaract Clubs and 23 Rotary Community Corps were organized.

Regarding its contributions to the Rotary Foundation, the Mega Team (a name adopted by Gov. Marquez for the Club Presidents and District Officers for Rotary Year 2000-2001)as of last count, were able to deliver four major gift donors and 205 Paul Harris Fellows for a total of $207,000.

The governor will also report on the 44 out of 56 clubs who have already qualified for the 21st Century Challenge (net gain of five members)—more than a month ahead of the deadline set by the Rotary International. In a related matter, 53 out of 56 clubs also have already qualified for the Presidential Citation Award of Rotary International.

In addition, the governor will also talk on the district's excellent overall performance in all avenues of service, including seminars on membership, Rotary Foundation and vocational services, New Generation Conference simultaneously held in September last year and the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards.

"The Rotary Clubs under our district have successfully created awareness in the communities through numerous and simultaneous projects in the field of health, hunger and humanity, benefiting various beneficiaries in the process," reports Governor Marquez.

In recognition, the governor will also lead the awarding and citations to various clubs and individuals who have given meaning and substance to the ideals of Rotary and the RI theme, "Create Awareness, Take Action."

### Mega Discon 2001

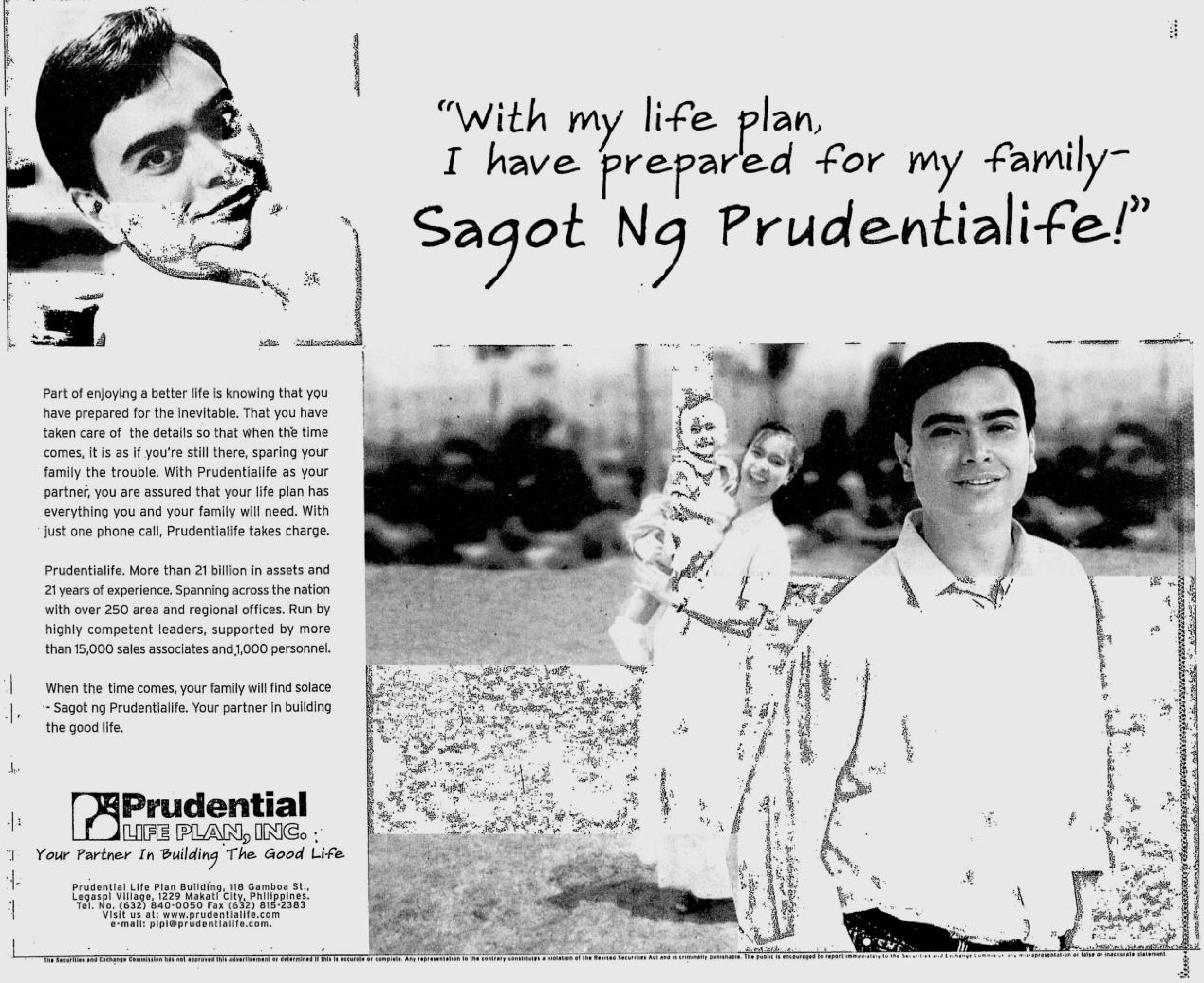
The District Conference, which has as its theme, "Go for Excellence, Make a Difference," has invited speakers to be led by Senate president Aquilino Pimentel, DECS secretary Raul Roco and Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste.

Past District Governor Efren Lim, the RI President's representative to the Conference, will deliver three major speeches. District Governor-elect Rudy Estrellado and District Governor-nominee Rosie Go, and the rest of the incoming district leaders will also be formally introduced as leaders-in-waiting.

Both inbound and outbound Group Study Exchange teams from Chicago, USA and Sweden will be presented during the Discon. Also expected to attend are delegations from Japan, Korea and Taiwan.

The latter part of the conference will be exclusively devoted to fellowships highlighted by the traditional Governor's Ball tomorrow night. Special presentations will also be held.

Mega Discon 2001 is hosted by Rotary Club of Bagumbayan-Manila which is headed by President Ernesto "Ernie" Choa. The Discon committee is chaired by Past President Eugenio "Sonny" Picazo and Secretary General, Past President Reynaldo "Rey" Cristobal of the host club.



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# MESSAGES

TO ALL Rotarians and guests attending the 3810 District Conference.

Gloria Rita and I send warm greetings to everyone attending this 2000-2001 District Conference. We wish to express our great appreciation for the dedication of Governor Richard M. Marquez and Evelyn, who, along with the conference committee, have put together a comprehensive program of Rotary information, fun and fellowship. You have a unique opportunity to make new friends and expand your Rotary horizons through many shared experiences. I urge you to take full advantage of this exceptional event to meet with your fellow Rotarians in a spirit of fellowship and service.

Unfortunately, it is not possible for Gloria Rita and me to visit all the conferences, so I have invited an outstanding Rotarian to represent me at your conference. Please welcome Efren Mariano Lim and his spouse Ma. Teresa, as our personal representatives. Efren is an exemplary Rotarian, an enthusiastic leader, and a delightful person. I'm sure you will enjoy their company during your district conference.

As this new millennium unfolds, I encourage you to find innovative and proactive ways to address the world's many pressing concerns. The Rotary year 2000-2001 is your chance to make a difference. You have a real opportunity to affect your community—and all of humanity. Together we can make a difference as we Create Awareness and Take Action.

Sincerely,

**FRANK J. DEVLYN**
President
Rotary International

GREETINGS to my Mega teammates, fellow Rotarians, spouses and guests attending the R.I. District 3810 Mega Discon 2001.

In the Rotary world, the District Conference is considered the most important festive event and definitely the most awaited amongst Rotarians of the District.

The District Conference is also the most opportune time to Create Awareness by featuring the various club projects, as well as, line up invited Plenary speakers to learn more about Rotary. It is our hope that the Discon sessions will inspire and motivate us to Take Action to intensify further the programs of Rotary International.

The Discon is also a celebration. It is the best time to recognize the clubs for their accomplishments and highlight their achievements.

We can also take advantage of this District fellowship as an excellent opportunity to meet new friends and enjoy the camaraderie and friendship of fellow Rotarians, hoping it will enhance the attainment of the object of Rotary—which is to develop the acquaintance as an opportunity for service.

My spouse Evelyn and I look forward to an enjoyable fellowship with all of you.

Finally, we hope that the Mega Discon 2001 will be a rewarding and inspiring experience for all of us. Let us continue to take action with humility and sincerity, and make things happen.

With trust in ourselves and faith in God, let's go for excellence and make a difference!

**DG RICHARD "CHAROY" M. MARQUEZ**
District Governor
District 3810

THE DISTRICT Conference is the showcase of Rotary in any given year. It motivates new Rotarians to become more involved in Rotary, and inspire all Rotarians to utilize Rotary International and Rotary Foundation programs as tools to help their club serve their community and communities in other countries.

Linda and I send our warm greetings to everyone attending the 2001 District Conference. We wish to express our great appreciation for the dedication of Governor Charoy M. Marquez, who, along with the Rotary Club of Bagumbayan-Manila, the host club, has put together a comprehensive program of Rotary information, fun, camaraderie and fellowship.

Let this occasion be a symbol of our social bond as part of this District activity as well as our unity as a people. Let this gathering signal to others what we, and every Rotarian in the District, stand ready to do where the greater interest of the nation lies and where the common good is best served.

Linda and I hope that you have been inspired by Rotary's theme this year, "Create Awareness, Take Action," in trying to make this world a better place to live in.

*Mabuhay* and more power!

**RODOLFO "RUDY" S. ESTRELLADO**
District Governor, RY 2001-2002

I COMMEND District Governor Richard "Charoy" M. Marquez for conceiving the Mega District Conference on March 8, 9 and 10, 2001 at the Fiesta Pavilion of The Manila Hotel with a very timely and appropriate theme: Create Awareness, Take Action!

Indeed, in Rotary work, we need to know what is happening around us in order to take proper action. Rotary is synonymous to dynamism. Each Rotarian must be alert, energetic and imbued with a noble spirt. These qualities will enable him to respond, build and improve'on the things around him.

The Rotary International District 3810's Mega Discon 2001 is therefore a very opportune event to recharge the Rotarian in us. Let us all join hands to make this conference a success and a fitting tribute to District Governor Charoy Marquez's fruitful term.

**(Sgd.) ROSIE D. GO**
District Governor Nominee
Rotary Year 2002-2003

TING and I are honored to represent Rotary International President Frank J. Devlyn and his spouse Gloria Rita at the Mega Discon 2001 of R.I. District 3810 under the able leadership of DG Richard Marquez.

R.I. District 3810 has always been at the forefront of Rotary activities. Its leaders, past and present, has consistently shown the highest degree of excellence and integrity in all their Rotary undertakings. It is in this light that many of us regard District 3810 as a premiere district worthy of emulation and inspiration.

Be that as it may, I ask each and every Rotarian in the district to remain vigilant in his or her resolve to be proactive in promoting and implementing the many programs of our beloved organization, not only this Rotary year but the rest of your Rotary lives. It is only through this that you can truly live up to the legacy of your distinguished leaders and the recognition bestowed upon the district for being a premier one.

This Mega Discon 2001, hosted by the home club of DG Charoy, Rotary Club of Bagumbayan Manila, shall celebrate once again the many good things that were accomplished in the name of Rotary. It is also time for meeting old friends, renewing acquaintances, and developing new friendships. Broadening and deepening these friendships should strengthen our resolve and enhance our effectiveness to serve for others.

May this conference inspire all to continuously Create Awareness and Take Action in our clubs, our communities and throughout the world!

**EFREN M. LIM**
District Governor, RY 1995-96
R.I. President Representative, RY 2000-01

FELLOW Rotarians, spouses and guests, welcome to Discon 2001

Congratulations to District Governor Charoy Marquez and his formidable team of district officers and club presidents for a successful year. They deserve this celebration as they approach the end of their term for a job well done.

For my RC Bagumbayan-Manila, this is the second time in five years that we hold the distinct honor and privilege of hosting a District Conference.

I was chairman of Discon 1996 and I notice a difference. We have a bigger, stronger, more dedicated club. Our younger members of 1996 have become rich in Rotary experience and can handle complex and multiple responsibilities. They have blossomed. They have matured.

In addition, DG Charoy is a tireless, hands-on leader. Thus, any credit for the success of Discon 2001 can only belong to these active members of the club. I salute them all.

I sincerely thank all those who have extended assistance to DG Charoy and to our club to make this Rotary year full of exemplary achievements and pleasant memories.

*Mabuhay!*

**PP EUGENIO "SONNY" A. PICAZO, MD, MBA**
Chairman, Discon 2001

IN A SHORT span of five years, the Rotary Club of Bagumbayan Manila is once again given the opportunity to host the grandest celebration in Rotary District 3810—the Mega Discon 2001.

This annual event hopes to bring altogether Rotarians, Rotary Anns, and Rotary's Partners in Service in a three-day celebration that will highlight the achievements of both the District and the Rotary Clubs.

With all of your heart and effort in building the District Conference, the Rotary Cub of Bagumbayan Manila will do its best to provide you with the most extensive program of activities this year.

Mega Discon 2001 also marks the unprecedented achievements of our District Governor Richard "Charoy" Marquez and for this phenomenal leadership which led a pack of successful Rotary Clubs.

May all of us carry the spirit of Rotary to continue our quest to go for excellence and make a difference!

*Mabuhay!*

**PRES. ERNESTO Y. CHOA**
Rotary Club of Bagumbayan Manila
Rotary Year 2000-2001

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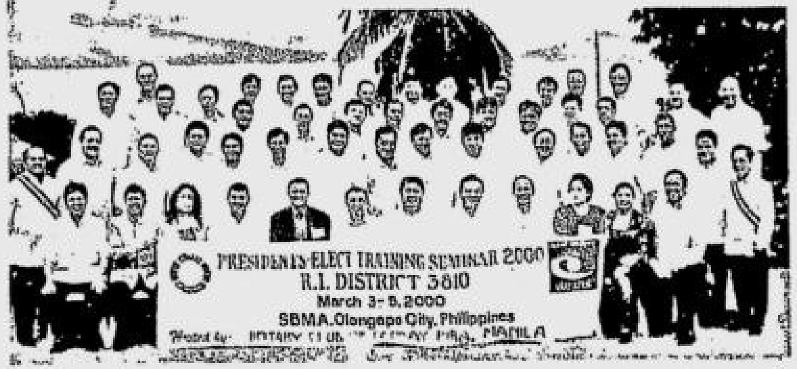
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ROTARY INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT 3810
MID-YEAR REVIEW
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# PROGRAM

## MARCH 8, 2001 - Thursday

| | |
|---|---|
| 9:00 AM | REGISTRATION |
| 12:00 NN | Lunch with RIPR and R.I. District 3810 PDGs |
| | Champagne Room |
| 2:00 PM | Ribbon Cutting of Exhibit Area |
| | Millenium Hall |

**PROGRAM PROPER**

**PLENARY 1: OPENING CEREMONIES**

| | |
|---|---|
| 3:00 PM | Entrance of Dignitaries |
| 3:05 PM | Call to Order |
| 3:10 PM | Parade of Clubs/Roll Call |
| 3:50 PM | Entry of Colors |
| 3:55 PM | Philippine National Anthem |
| | Doxology |
| 4:05 PM | Opening Remarks |
| 4:10 PM | Welcome Remarks |
| 4:15 PM | Introduction of Dignitaries at the Head Table |
| 4:20 PM | Introduction of special Delegations & Guests |
| 4:25 PM | Recognition of PDGs |
| 4:30 PM | Introduction of District Officers (by groups) |
| 4:35 PM | Turnover of donation from R.I. District 2820, Japan |
| 4:40 PM | Entertainment Number |
| 4:50 PM | Introduction of the District Governor |
| 4:55 PM | District Governor's Address |
| 5:25 PM | Introduction of R.I.President's Representative |
| 5:30 PM | Keynote Address |
| 6:00 PM | Announcements |
| | Recess |
| 6:30 PM | Fellowship/Cocktails |
| | Centennial Hall |
| | Golf Awards |
| | Presentation of MEGA DISCON 2001 Major Sponsor |
| | Raffles |
| | ENTERTAINMENT NUMBERS |

## MARCH 9, 2001 - Friday

| | |
|---|---|
| 7:00 AM | Breakfast meeting with RIPR, MEGA Presidents and District Officers |
| | Maynila, Manila Hotel |
| | Invocation |
| | National Anthem |
| | Introduction of Dignitaries at the Presidential Table |
| | Message |
| | Announcements |
| | Raffle |

**PLENARY 2: CREATE AWARENESS, TAKE ACTION IN OUR COMMUNITIES**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9:00 AM | Call to Order |
| | National Anthem |
| 9:05 AM | Invocation |
| 9:10 AM | Introduction of Dignitaries at the Head Table |
| 9:15 AM | Presentation of New Partners in Service |
| | I. New Interact Clubs |
| | II. New Rotaract Clubs |
| | III. New Rotary Community Corps |
| 9:35 AM | Presentation of DRR, Wendell Garcia and DIR, Paul Joseph Delos Santos |
| 9:45 AM | 'Rotary Community Corps Labangan Success Story (Video) |
| 10:05 AM | Entertainment Number |
| 10:20 AM | Introduction of Guest Speaker |
| 10:25 AM | THE YOUTH - Hope of the Nation |
| 10:55 AM | Presentation of Token of Appreciation |
| 11:00 AM | Recognition of Significant Project Awardees |
| | Recognition of 4 Avenues of Service Awardee |
| | Recognition of "Service Above Self" Awareness |
| 11:15 AM | Introduction of Presentation Speaker |
| | "Goodbye Polio, Thank you Rotary" |
| 11:30 AM | Presentation of Madulaang Sabayang Bigkas Champion |
| 11:40 AM | Recognition of Sponsoring Clubs of |
| | A. New Interact Clubs |
| | B. New Rotaract Clubs |
| 11:55 AM | Recognition of Sponsoring Clubs of |
| | A. Rotary Community Corps |
| 12:00 PM | Announcement |
| | Recess |
| 12:15 PM | LUNCHEON SESSION |
| 12:30 PM | Call to Order |
| | National Anthem |
| | Invocation |
| | Introduction of Dignitaries at the Head Table |
| 1:00 PM | Raffles |
| 1:10 PM | Entertainment Number |
| 1:25 PM | Introduction of Guest of Honor & Speaker |
| 1:30 PM | MESSAGE |
| 1:55 PM | Presentation of Token of Appreciation |
| 2:00 PM | Announcement |
| | Recess |

**PLENARY 3: CREATE AWARENESS, TAKE ACTION IN OUR CLUBS**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2:30 PM | Call to Order |
| | National Anthem |
| | Invocation |
| 2:40 PM | Introduction of Dignitaries at the Head Table |
| 2:45 PM | Presentation of Children from Marillac Hills |
| 3:00 PM | My Romance with Rotary |
| 3:20 PM | Presentation of the School for the Blind Choir |
| 3:35 PM | Recognition of Presidential Citation Awardees |
| 3:55 PM | Recognition of 21st Century Challenge Awardees |
| 4:15 PM | Presentation of Newly Chartered Clubs and Provisional Clubs |
| 4:35 PM | Recognition of Top Clubs in: |
| | I. Attendance |
| | II. NET Gain |
| | NET Gain (Absolute) |
| | NET Gain (Including Club Extension) |
| | NET Gain (Per Capita) |
| | NET Gain (Per Capita Including Club Extension) |
| 4:55 PM | MEGA Incentive Raffle |
| | Raffles |
| 5:20 PM | Announcements |
| | Recess |
| 7:30 PM | DINNER & GOVERNOR'S BALL |
| | ENTERTAINMENT NUMBERS |

## MARCH 10 - Saturday

| | |
|---|---|
| 7:00 AM | Breakfast with DGE Rudy Estrellado |
| | Champagne Salon |

**PLENARY 4: CREATING AWARENESS, TAKE ACTION IN OUR WORLD**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9:00 AM | Call to Order |
| 9:01 AM | National Anthem |
| 9:03 AM | Invocation |
| 9:05 AM | Introduction of Dignitaries |
| 9:10 AM | TRF Alumni – Brazil |
| 9:15 AM | TRF Alumni - North Carolina |
| 9:20 AM | Presentation of Inbound GSE Team Chicago/Sweden |
| 10:00 AM | Introduction of Keynote Speaker |
| 10:05 AM | DECS and Rotary as Partners in Service |
| 10:35 AM | Presentation of Token of Appreciation |
| 10:40 AM | Presentation of Outbound GSE Team Chicago/Sweden |
| 11:20 AM | Children's Opportunity Grants |
| 11:30 AM | 3-H Grants |
| 11:40 AM | Grant for University Teacher (video) |
| 11:45 AM | Recognition of all New Paul Harris Fellows |
| | Major Gift Donors |
| 12:00 NN | Announcement |
| | Raffles |
| | Recess |
| 12.30 NN | LUNCHEON |
| 1:00 PM | Call to Order |
| 1:01 PM | National Anthem |
| 1:03 PM | Invocation |
| 1:05 PM | Introduction of Dignitaries at the Head Table |
| 1:10 PM | Introduction of Keynote Speaker |
| 1:15 PM | "Rotary Today" |
| 1:50 PM | Announcement |
| | Raffles |
| 2:00 PM | Recess |

**PLENARY 5: CLOSING CEREMONIES**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2:30 PM | Call to Order |
| 2:31 PM | National Anthem |
| 2:33 PM | Invocation |
| 2:35 PM | Introduction of Dignitaries |
| 2:40 PM | District Business |
| | Courtesy Resolutions to host club & participants |
| | District Resolutions |
| | Recommendations to R.I. Board |
| | Recommendations to Council on Legislation |
| | Report on Credentials & Elections |
| 3:00 PM | Introduction of District Governor-Elect RY 2001-2002 |
| | Incoming District Secretary |
| 3:05 PM | "What's in store for RY2001-2002" |
| 3:25 PM | Introduction of PRES. and Incoming District Officers |
| 3:30 PM | Introduction of District Governor Nominee |
| 3:35 PM | Acceptance Speech |
| 3:55 PM | Promo of DISCON 2002 |
| | Incoming District Secretary |
| 4:05 PM | Promo of "On to San Antonio, Texas" |
| 4:15 PM | Promo of Asian Presidential Conference |
| 4:20 PM | Summation by R.I. President's Representative |
| 4:40 PM | Governor's Closing Message |
| 4:50 PM | Awards of Appreciation to RIPR and Spouse |
| 4:55 PM | Raffles |
| 5:00 PM | Adjournment |

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| | |
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| DOWNTOWN MANILA | BENJAMIN "Ben" P. PINEDA |
| ERMITA, MANILA | ROSENDO "Toto" J. PIÑON |
| HIYAS NG MAYNILA | ROWENA "Ching" B. CRUZ |
| INTRAMUROS | FLORENCIO "Floren" L. NAGUIT |
| MANILA | SEBASTIAN "Buster" B. ARRASTIA |
| MANILA BAY | ANTONIO "Tony" C. MONCUPA |
| MANILA CENTRAL | RUBEN "Ben" L. SIAO |
| MANILA EAST | CONRADO "Jun" T. VILLANUEVA |
| MANILA METRO | YOLANDA "Yollie" A. CONCEPCION |
| MANILA MIDTOWN | JESUS "Jess" L. CHUA |
| MANILA NORTH | MATIAS "Mat" SA. CALAYAG |
| MANILA SAN MIGUEL | HARRY C. LORENZO |
| MANILA SOUTH | FELIZARDO "Doy" DR. FRANCISCO |
| PACO | RONNIE "Ron" C. SILVESTRE |
| PANDAY PIRA | EUGENIO "Gene" J. VINTA |
| QUIAPO | BUENAVENTURA "Ben" C. GLORY. |
| RAHA SULAYMAN | JOSE WILFRIDO "Willy" S. OCA |
| SAMPALOC | MELGASAR "Mel" A. ADOFINA |
| TONDO | AMELIA "Mellie" V. SANTOS |
| UNIVERSITY DISTRICT | JAIME "Jimmy" M. CABASE |
| UPTOWN MANILA | MANUEL "Manny" L. YU |
| **PASAY** | |
| PASAY | JOSEPH R. LIM |
| PASAY CENTRAL | CRISTINA "Cristie" CARIASO-CABUHAT |
| PASAY GIL PUYAT | CLEMENCE R. SABILLA |
| PASAY METRO | ELIZABETH "Beth" P. NIEVA |
| PASAY MIA | CARLOS "Charlie" M. CALLEJO |
| PASAY NORTH | CARLOS F. DOLENDO |
| PASAY ROXAS BLVD. | BENITO "Benny" N. HERNANDEZ |
| PASAY SILANGAN | ILDEFONSO "Chito" S. DEL ROSARIO |
| PASAY SOUTH | LILIA "Lou" C. PASTORAL |
| PASAY VILLAMOR | ARNULFO "Arnie" G. ACEDERA |
| PASAY WEST | ROGELIO "Roger" R. SERRANO |
| **MINDORO** | |
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| CALINTAAN | SACLOLO S. TRIA |
| MAGSAYSAY | RICARDO "Ric" M. DIMALALUAN |
| MAMBURAO | GLICERIO "Jun" M. ALMERO |
| RIZAL | JOSEFINO A. GARILLO |
| SABLAYAN | ROBERTO "Obet" C. LIM |
| SAN JOSE | RENATO "Allen" C. TAN |
| SAN JOSE EAST | MA. DOLORES "Dolly" G. MALLAR |
| STA. CRUZ | LEONARDO "Ding" R. ABELEDA |
| **CAVITE** | |
| BACOOR | OSCAR "Oca" J. GARCIA |
| CARMONA | ROY M. LOYOLA |
| CAVITE | ELMER "Emong" R. PRESA |
| CAVITE WEST | JOSE "Joey" A. MENDOZA |
| CAVITE EAST | VALERIANO "Val" M. ESPIRITU |
| CAVITE EPZA | SANTOS "Boy" RAMOS, JR. |
| DASMARIÑAS | NESTOR "Nesting" DR. SAPIDA |
| FCIE | MELENCIO "Mel" BALILO |
| GENERAL TRIAS | ERNESTO "Erning" S. FRANCISCO |
| GENERAL TRIAS SOUTH | EDGARDO "Ed" C. BARTOLOME |
| HIYAS NG CAVITE | VENUS D. DE CASTRO |
| HIYAS NG IMUS | EVELYN R. DOMINGUEZ |
| IMUS | VICTORIA "Vi" V. ILAS |
| IMUS AGUINALDO | SIXTO TOLENTINO, JR. |
| IMUS EAST | EDWARD "Ed" B. VILLANUEVA |
| IMUS SOUTH | GERMAN "Bibol" MATUS |
| INDANG | MAXIMO "Max" V. NOVA |
| KAWIT | JOEL V. SOCO |
| MARAGONDON | CRISAURO REGINALD "Cris" ARANDIA |
| ROSARIO | RODOLFO "Boyet" H. GARCIA, JR. |
| SILANG | RODRIGO "Uding" T. MARAYAG |
| TAGAYTAY | TOMAS "Tom" H. TORNEROS |
| TANZA | BIENVENIDO "Benny" G. PEREA |
| TRECE MARTIREZ | ROMULO "Bobby" R. MOJICA |

## Top bands featured in Freego Concert

THE country's leading jeans brand, Freego, ushers in a revolutionary breakthrough in denims with a free gig titled "Jeanetics Concert" happening on March 24, Saturday, 7 p.m., at the Folk Arts Theater--with a kick-off promo at all leading department stores this month.

Heading the concert are the country's top two bands, Freestyle and Parokya ni Edgar with special participation of Paco Arespacochaga with Skin Band. This event is in cooperation with Cotton USA.

The concert promo started last March 1 in conjuction with the launch of a new concept called Freego Jeanetics. Get a free entrance ticket to the concert for every purchase of a regular pair of Freego men's or ladies' jeans.

Radio jocks in four popular FM stations, 97.1 dwLS, 89.9 dwTM RX 93.1 and 93.6 dwKC, will also give away Freego Jeanetics shirts from 6 a.m. to 12 noon via a live phone-in-promo called the "Jeanetics Q&A Game."

The new Freego Jeanetics, touted as the new blueprint in jeans, is designed to reinvent the classic denim with a modern twist by fusing together nature and technology in fashion.

The new design concept gives each each Freego Jeanetics product a three-dimensional shape that provides superior comfort and ease of movement.

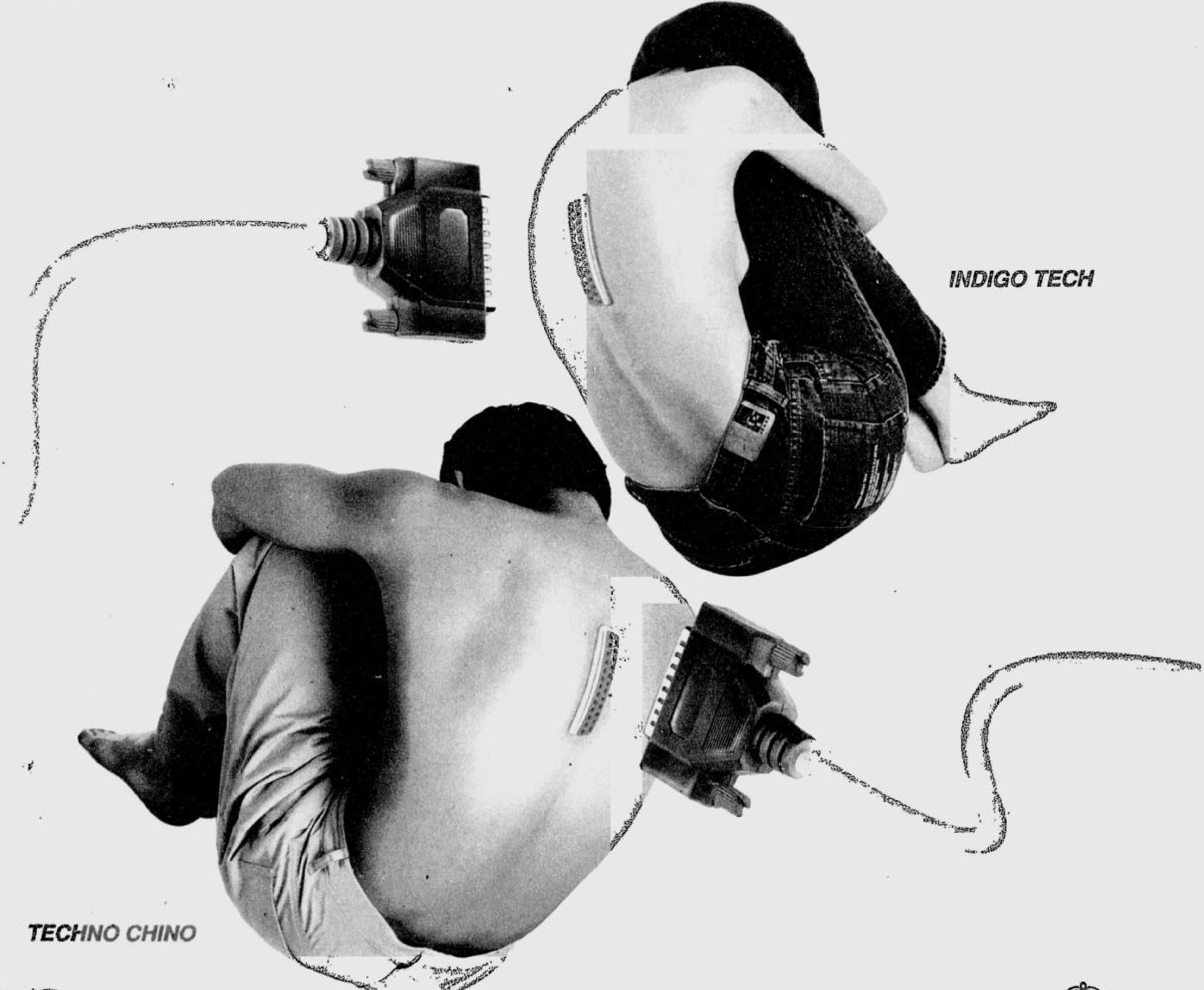
Inspired by the human form and ergonomically designed to move comfortably with the body's contours, Freego Jeanetics give the wearer unparalleled style and the best comfort via an innovative wash technique called Technowash.

The new Freego Jeanetics comes in Freego Indigo Tech (FIT) and Freego Techno Chino (FTC) in jeans and wide range of Jeanetics collection in shirts.

Buyers of Freego Jeanetics can avail of the concert promo in all department stores of SM Shoemart, Robinson's, Isetann, Ever and Sta. Lucia in Metro Manila only.

Promo is good until tickets last.

FREEGO
JEANETICS



COTTON USA

Catch **FREEGO JEANETICS** Concert, featuring **Parokya ni Edgar** and **Freestyle** with the special participation of **Paco Arespacochaga** with **Skin** at the Folk Arts Theater on March 24, Saturday, 7 PM for **FREE** when you buy a regular pair of Freego men's/ladies' jeans. Promo ends until ticket supply lasts. Available at SM Shoemart, Robinson's, Isetann, Ever & Sta. Lucia East department stores in Metro Manila only.

FREEGO

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0444 Series of 2001.

# LIFESTYLE

CHELO BANAL-FORMOSO, Editor

# Nursed back to health by faith, friendship and food

**IN GOOD TASTE**

Doreen G. Fernandez

CHEF Ed Quimson—he of the Brada Gallery cooking school, of past special assignments in L.A., in Subic, etc.—and I found ourselves both in the Makati Medical Center early this year; he with a dislocated shoulder, me with double pneumonia. The encounter turned out to be a food adventure. I took what the dietary department decreed, and they kindly visited and accepted requests. "Anything sour," I said, so I can taste it despite low salt and no oil. So I had *paksiw*, *sinigang*, and the like, of various fishes (*tiyan ng bangus* was the best). I kind of lost my appetite, and Ed woke it up again.

> One prays and thanks the Lord for every moment of breath and all the acts of love

### Brada Gallery

There were products from his school and partners: a superb squash soup and a chicken soup into which a whole chicken had been distilled, super tasty *lengua de gato*. One memorable day Ed did a *paella* demonstration at the Floating Island restaurant on the third floor, a true and special one unstinting in saffron, pure virgin olive oil, clams and mussels. It was precious, and one of my doctors tasted it and is still haunted by it. Another time Ed asked us to help evaluate five *paellas—negra*, *Valenciana*, *cetas y mejillones*, lamb, etc. Sometimes there was pasta cooked by Tootsie Marco; or an organic salad grown by Sylvia Cancio.

### Get-well wishes

From my friend Doren Tayag of Angeles, Pampanga came a German chocolate cake that was to die for. It is one she redesigned according to Filipino tastes and her experience. Doren also has a superb rum cake, Amaretto, Bailey's and Kahlua cakes in the wings. (Call her at [045] 888-3357; delivery can be made in Manila.)

STEPH BRAVO

Carmel Dael brought strawberries, her specialty, *tuyo* fillets in chili oil, and tiramisu she had made herself.

Pia Lim Castillo, who has a line of food products, including the famous duck *siopao*, invented for us Ubad Binakol, combining two Ilonggo favorites. *Ubad* is the core of the banana plant (as *ubod* is the core of the coconut), and we cook it with pork or chicken and perhaps *kadyos*. Pia had chicken in hers and young coconut, which we use in the famous *binakol* soup, originally cooked in bamboo tubes. It was so good I could taste it in my dreams. (Call her at 810-7337.)

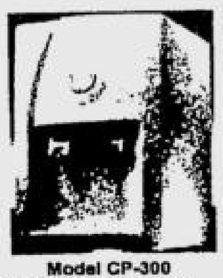
From my old *suki*, Aling Tonang, came a *bilao* of *pancit palabok* which nurses, guests, etc., shared. (Call 532-7245; they deliver.) Ed squirreled away the rest in his room for midnight hungers.

From dear friend Nancy Reyes came a *pesang dalag* freshly made, and red and green seedless grapes. Oh the procession of wonderful Philippine fruits! Ponkan, mangoes, strawberries, pomelos, oranges, for a start. We Filipinos do say a lot with fruits and other food, bringing warm good wishes and fresh thoughts into a hospital room.

An affair to remember was our Valentine dinner—yes, in the hospital. My appetite was fully awake by then, and dear friend Chef Jessie Sincioco of Le Soufflé sent us a Valentine dinner for two. To my room came a table with a thick tablecloth, a rose, red wine and champagne. A superb dinner was specially designed for us—salad, soup, sherbet, fish and a special Jessie dessert of mangoes and strawberries—and with it came a bow-tied waiter and chef who stayed with us all night. This was on the evening of Valentine's Day, the busiest night in any restaurant. I kept trying to make them go and help Jessie with her more-than-full house, but their orders were to stay and serve us in elegance and splendor. No candles, because there are oxygen outlets in the room. Le Soufflé, one of my favorite restaurants, will do this for you upon request. Music there was: Ed's collection of CDs ranging from opera to disco. Who would dare remain unwell after that?

That day I changed my mind about the nature of Valentine's Day, which I used to ignore because it was so commercial, so much hyped, and instead I saw it as a time to express affection. I gave flowers to Ed's mother Betty, my nurses Winnie and Juliet, the nurses at the station, and to Katrina, my physical therapist.

Two-and-a-half months in the hospital constituted a spiritual as well as a healing experience. First, one concentrates on getting well, with faith in the advancements of science and the skill of doctors. Then one focuses on gradually rebuilding a normal world. One thinks individually as well of those who send flowers and food, cards and Masses, the wonderfully supportive family, and those who visit (I was not allowed visitors for a while). Along the way one prays and thanks the Lord for every moment of breath and friendship (Fr. James B. Reuter, SJ, said Mass for Ed, Sanirose and Ole Orbeta and me in my room), for all the acts of love. That was the grand experience, and love is the root word.



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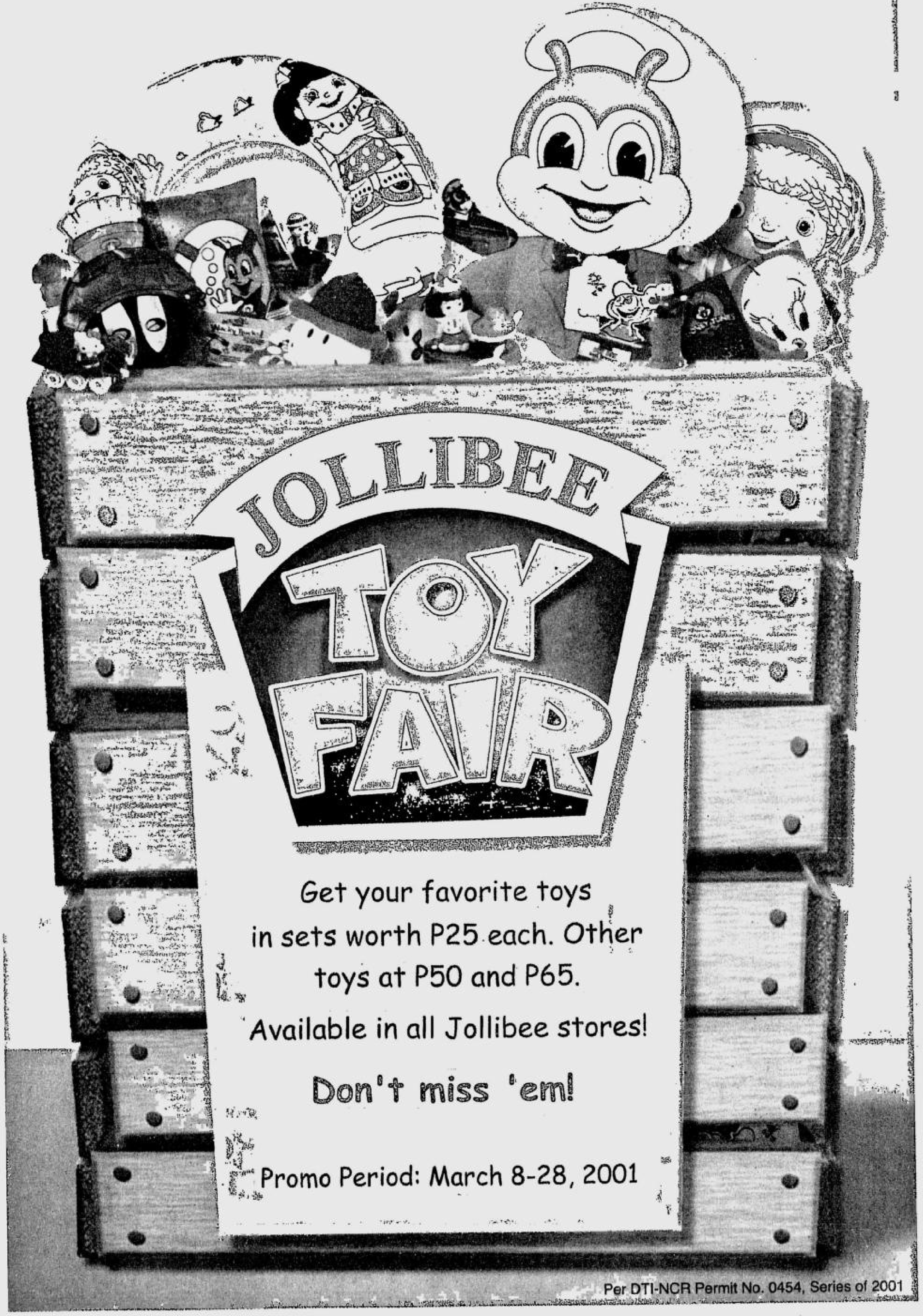

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0454, Series of 2001

# Why does salmon sometimes taste bitter?

**ASK NORA**

*Nora V. Daza*

CYNTHIA Cruz of Brunei wrote echoing a trend in today's lifestyle.

She says: "We have been wanting to shift our diet to fish and vegetables for health reasons. My husband has high cholesterol.

"I learned that salmon fat is good in reducing cholesterol. It is good we can buy salmon here at reasonable prices. But I am wondering why there are times that my salmon recipe has a bitter taste. I do not know if it is from the marinade or from the fish itself.

"I learned that there are high-quality salmon that really tastes sweet even without cooking. Are there more things I should know about buying and cooking salmon? I would appreciate it if you could give me some recipes."

## Cultivated

Due to aquaculture, salmon is now cultivated just like prawns, *bangus* and *tilapia*, among other seafood. In the past, salmon was caught in the wild as it swam up to its breeding grounds in temperate countries. I used to buy salmon from Hokkaido, Japan. I know that salmon is plentiful in Canada, Seattle and other cold countries. Due to advances in technology, salmon is more accessible and less expensive. In fact, I was surprised to find salmon sold in the wet market in Quezon City. The demand must force the supply to be here in Manila, in spite of the higher price salmon fetches.

To obtain the best possible salmon, I had to buy them whole. I used to go to the wholesale markets in temperate countries. The salmon would be brought in very fresh with its bright silver scales all intact. One only had to select the size and weight to get very fresh salmon. When we bought our salmon we had what the cooks called *potajeng pare*. These were the salmon head and tail boiled in a stylized *sinigang* with the luscious gelatin and flesh sweetly fresh.

Another recipe of fresh salmon is Carpaccio. These are very thin slices of fresh salmon with just a twist of lemon, sea salt, freshly ground pepper and a dribble of olive oil. The Salmon Carpaccio I had at the Closerie de Lilas was exceptional. It was so good that I had eaten all of it and did not bother to analyze what went into it. One thing we can be sure of was that the salmon was the freshest ever, and it was chilled enough so that the slices were paper-thin.

Still another recipe I know uses fresh, thick slices of salmon, à la Mylene:

4 salmon steaks (80-100 g per piece)
Salt and pepper
¼ c lemon juice
12-16 very thin slices of lemon
Colored peppercorns
4 pc aluminum paper

Prepare the fresh salmon steaks, arranging them on a piece of aluminum foil. Season with salt and pepper. Brush with lemon juice. Arrange the lemon slices on top of the salmon steak. Sprinkle a few drops of olive oil and add the peppercorns for flavor and decor. Keep the aluminum-wrapped salmon chilled. Just before serving, remove from the refrigerator and bake in a dish with the aluminum foil tightly crumpled on top. The flavors trapped inside the foil should cook the salmon. Depending on the size, the salmon should be cooked in 10-15 minutes or until the salmon flesh is firm.

You can unwrap the salmon slightly so that your guests do not get the steam on their faces. This was served at a luncheon with special sea salt mixed with thyme on the side and a tasty salad and hot French bread.

The bitter taste Cynthia mentioned might have come from the marinade or the bile of the salmon if the fish monger was careless. The flavor of salmon is its prime asset. So, if one marinates salmon so that the flavor is masked, one must be slightly tired of having salmon very often.

Why pink?

I have long wanted to find out what it was that gave salmon its pink color. In the late '60s, we were invited to lunch at a two-star restaurant in the south of France. We got lost and arrived at 3 p.m., starving. We had the most delicious salmon trout (*truit salmonee*) I have ever tried in my life. It could be that I was hungry but I was almost sure that our host was justly proud in telling us that we were being served a rare dish. This was caught in the wild and was very fresh. As he whispered this into our ears I had the impression that this special fish was caught under "special" circumstances. What stayed with me was the flavor of the trout with that tinge of salmon flavor in it.

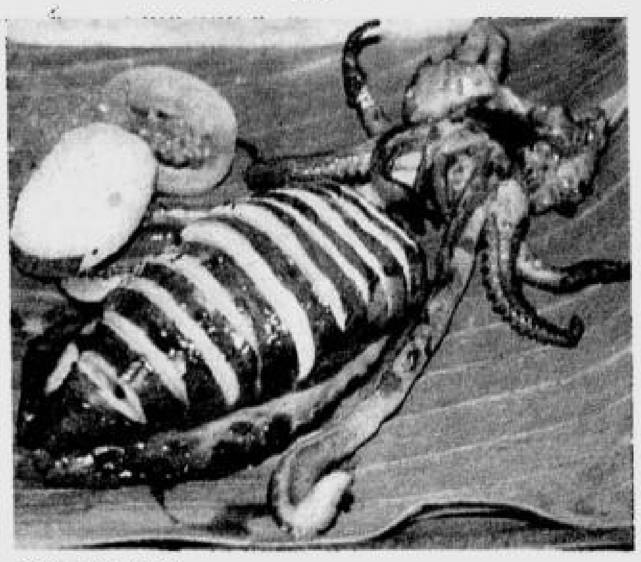
What gives salmon and salmon trout that delicate pink flesh and unique flavor? I've been asking this question for decades. I just got my answer last week.

Dr. Edgardo D. Gomez of the Marine Technology Institute of the University of the Philippines told me that this pink flesh is genetic. It is not due to the shellfish that the salmon and trout fed on. This is something I was told in the past.

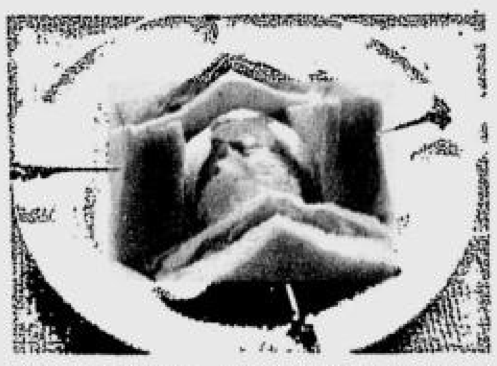
About the cholesterol in fish. This is what is called the good cholesterol. I asked a heart specialist about this. In simple terms, good cholesterol does not clog the blood vessels, which is the cause of heart disease. The bad cholesterol, which comes from the fat of animals like pork, beef and chicken, is the one that can form deposits that clog the blood vessels leading to the heart. But there are other factors that come into play in the malfunction of the heart. Heredity, stress, exercise, lifestyle, drinking and smoking may all contribute to heart ailments. The bottom line is to eat wisely, avoid becoming overweight, exercise and have a doctor guide you.

*E-mail the author at ngdev@info.com.ph*

# A grill bar that's big in taste



GRILLED Pusit



LOUISE'S Kiss, warm apple-cinnamon sandwich served with ice cream

THOSE who have gotten hooked on some of the most delicious Filipino delicacies and grilled dishes at Congo Grill bar and restaurant on Timog Avenue, QC will be glad to get the good news about this establishment.

One is that this restaurant has just celebrated its first anniversary, which indicates a more steadfast commitment to deliver quality service and affordably delicious dishes. The bigger news is that Congo Grill Bar and Restaurant has opened another exciting branch at El Pueblo, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

Congo Grill has certainly achieved so much in just one year in the business, owing to its ability to respond to the public's demand for a higher level of restaurant service.

House specialties have enticed customers to keep coming back. Among the bestsellers are Sisig, Crispy Pata, Kare-kare, Tuna Belly, Grilled Pusit and Blue Marlin, all done with special twists. Plus, there's also Tuna Tail, a premium alternative to Crispy Pata for the more health-conscious diners. All these and more are prepared using only the finest, freshest ingredients and, definitely, no MSG.

There's also the Congo Rice and Black Ink Rice, which is served with squid ink and topped with *calamares*. For dessert, the owners recommend Congo Mango and the special Frozen Maki.

For beer drinkers, every hour is happy hour at only P26 per bottle. The place becomes cozy for drinking, especially late nights when the lights are dimmed.

Those who are unaware of Congo Grill's Filipino ownership easily assume it's a foreign franchise since aside from its posh ambiance, the staff is always up on its toes to deliver quick, courteous and utmost service. Both Congo Grill branches are also replete with exotic accents and décor that highlight its earthy color tones and modern African theme that says, in effect, bigness in fun and in taste.

The new and bigger Congo Grill in Pasig also takes pride in being the only restaurant in El Pueblo with al fresco style dining that offers a top view of the district. Customers can also opt to move into the wider air-conditioned interior if they want to enjoy their sizzling cuisine in a cooler setting.

And those who wish to indulge in their favorite Congo Grill dishes in the comfort of their homes or offices can call the El Pueblo branch for delivery around Mandaluyong and Ortigas Center areas. This means that more and more people will enjoy this premier restaurant's delicious taste and affordable price.

Call 638-3857 (El Pueblo) and 928-5840 (Timog).

# Chinese meals from the house of authentic Peking duck

**DINING OUT**

**TIONG KEE**, the house of authentic Peking Roasted Duck, offers value-for-money combination meals of Chinese cuisine. There are five to choose from: Char Shin (pork *asado*) with rice at P53.95; Mixed Asado (Char Shin, pork innards, *siomai*) with rice at P69.95; Roasted Spare Ribs with *siomai* and rice at P59.90; Soy Chicken/White Chicken, Shark's Fin, *siomai* and rice, P79.95; Roasted Duck with *siomai* and rice, P89.95. Tiong Kee's branches are located at the food court of Sta. Lucia Grand East Mall in Cainta and at 834 Banawe St., corner Del Monte Ave., QC.

**TEN NOODLES.** The restaurant offers two new Asian noodle dishes, namely Yakisoba and Veggie Spring Rolls. The first is a mix of Japanese stir-fried noodles, pork, squid, mushrooms and seaweed. Veggie Spring Rolls are a blend of noodles, carrots, basil and mint leaves wrapped up and served fresh with Vietnamese sauce. Ten Noodles is located at the Main Mall of Harrison Plaza in Malate, Manila.

**HERITAGE HOTEL.** Savor the spices and flavors of Singaporean cuisine and get a chance to win raffle prizes. Try the combination of Bak Kut Teh (Pork Ribs Soup) and Satay Mee Hoon (Rice Vermicelli Topped with Peanut Sauce with Mixed Seafood and Meat). A Taste of Singapore is ongoing at the Heritage Hotel Manila's Restaurant Riviera until March 31. Call 854-8888.

**ARESI.** The restaurant offers a pica-pica bar composed of Salmon Roulade, Salpicao, Garlic Pork Chops, Canapés, Salmon Croquettas, Kebablets and many more for only P195. Unlimited beer and pica-pica are also offered for P350, while beer is only at P25. Discount on drinks and wine will also surprise the cocktail patrons. Aresi is located along Tomas Morato corner Eugenio Lopez Streets, QC. Call 921-0269.

**TORTILLA FUSION.** For only P55, get a taste of Tortilla Fusion's array of gourmet wraps quesadillas and tacos served with your favorite drink. Its gourmet wraps feature flavored tortillas with hints of Asian, Continental and haute cuisine recipes. Its quesadillas come in Salami, Sausage, Cheese and Veggie variants. As for the tacos, diners can opt for either the traditional crisp taco shell or the soft taco served with ground beef or chicken, lettuce, pico de gallo and cheese. Tortilla Fusion's outlets are located at SM North Edsa, SM Manila and Greenbelt Mall.

**IL PONTICELLO.** Enjoy an epicurean holiday in Rome with Il Ponticello's "Roman Holiday" food festival this March. On the menu are, Fettuce alla Chitarra (grilled chicken slices served atop a bed of fresh hand-made pasta "Tagliatelle" in mushroom porcini cream sauce); Pasta e Bigne con le Ostriche (pasta with deep-fried vegetables and oysters in cream puffs), and Saltimbocca alla Romana, (seared thin sliced veal loin with Parma ham in white wine and olive oil). Il Ponticello is located at the 2/F of Antel 2000, Valero Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City. Call 887-7168 or 887-4998.

**HOTEL INTER-CON.** Prince Albert Rotisserie offers a special menu selection of soufflés as appetizers, main dishes and desserts until March 24. Among the delicious soufflé preparations are Duck Liver Soufflé on a Bed of Aragula Salad and Sautéed Mushrooms Decanted Dressing; Lobster Souffle on an Asparagus Salad, Shellfish Dressing; Salmon Filet Soufflé with Scallops and Lettuce Juices, Provencal Vegetables; Supreme of Freerange Chicken Soufflé with Chicken Liver, Darphin Herb Potato, Truffle Chicken Jus; Hot Soufflé desserts. Call 819-0654.

**TEQUILA JOE'S.** The price of beer comes down to as low as P25 at Tequila Joe's. Ongoing now at all three Tequila Joe's outlets, this beer promo cuts 50-percent off the price on all beers every day from 11 a.m.-1 a.m.). Tequila Joe's restaurants are located at the Glorietta 4 Ayala Center Makati, El Pueblo in Ortigas Center and Alabang Town Center. Call 850-4798 or 850-9513 (Alabang) and 636-3599 or 636-3572 (El Pueblo) and 873-3777 or 812-0444 (Glorietta).

**EDSA SHANGRI-LA.** The world converges at the Edsa Shangri-La's Lobby Lounge from Monday to Friday at 7-9 p.m. with a wine buffet. The featured wines are from the best wine-producing countries in the world. The buffet includes the wines of Chile Vina Sta. Rita and Montana Wines of New Zealand. Stellenbosch Estates of South Africa presents Two Oceans while Australia's Lindemans offers Cawarra Shiraz.

CHINESE/ p.C3

**PRIMED** for a prime rib? Try Outback Steakhouse's Prime Minister's Prime Rib with a glass of Fetzer wine. Outback's branches are located in Glorietta IV, Makati City and Libis, QC. Opening soon is Outback Steakhouse in Alabang Town Center.

Drink eight glasses of water.

(In one sitting.)

Indian Food Festival with visiting Chef Harpal Singh Sokhi of The Regent Bombay. Spices Restaurant, March 9 to 31, 2001

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## Waitering and bartending workshops

MAYA Kitchen's integrated workshop on food and beverage service features lessons on waitering and bartending. Scheduled until March 9 and on March 20-23 at 5:45 p.m., the workshop teaches creative techniques for efficient table-setting and table-setting standards like American, Russian and French styles; attractive table arrangement; napkin folding and skirting; meeting, greeting and seating of guests; selling techniques; order-taking and sequence of proper serving; serving beverage and entrée; and setting up of service station and checkpoints. It also covers bartending basics and cocktail mixing. The fee includes free snack and handouts.

Call 892-1185, 892-5011, locals 108 or 109 or visit the Maya Kitchen at the 8/F, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Avenue (formerly Pasay Road), Makati City.

## Chinese meals from the house . . .

(From page C2)

Wines from Turner Road Vintners Vendange of California, USA compete for preference with France's Domaine La Chevaliere Robert Giraud Chevaliere and Blason Timberlay together with Finca Flichman of Argentina.

**DUSIT.** Experience the rich culture of Ilocos Norte at Dusit Hotel via "Gamet, Bagnet ken Pakbet," March 16-23. The food festival will feature a buffet spread of authentic Ilokano delicacies prepared by Ilokano chefs. Call 867-3333, locals 3346 to 3347.

## *WOMEN ON WINGS*

Psychology expert John Gray once made an observation about men and women. He said it so well, it became the title of his bestseller — Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Venus. Yes, indeed, men and women are not only poles apart in their thinking, in their concerns and in many other ways... they are planets apart. So they say - it takes a woman to enjoy the company of another woman doing "women" things like hectic non-stop shopping, a lazy day at the spa, enjoying a jazz festival and so on....

It is on this note that Singapore Airlines launches the Women On Wings Privilege Promotion — a specially designed vacation promo package for women only. A salute to women who work hard at their careers and who work even harder at their homes and family life. They too, deserve a break from the rest of mankind, don't they?

Singapore Airlines' Women On Wings Privilege Promotion starts on March 22 and runs until May 31, 2001. It targets a group of two or more women who would just like to drop everything... and hie off, or better yet – fly to their dream vacation.

From as low as $456 per person, they can take a trip to exciting New Asia Singapore. At little extra cost, there are also three other exotic Asian destinations to choose from - Bali, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok. These privilege tours range from 3 days to 4 days, depending on the package chosen, with the option of extending one's stay. Ladies who avail of the packages to Kuala Lumpur or Bali may choose to extend a night's stay in Singapore for only $20 per person. A special treat for our ladies visiting Bangkok for they will enjoy the additional night's hotel stay in Singapore for FREE!

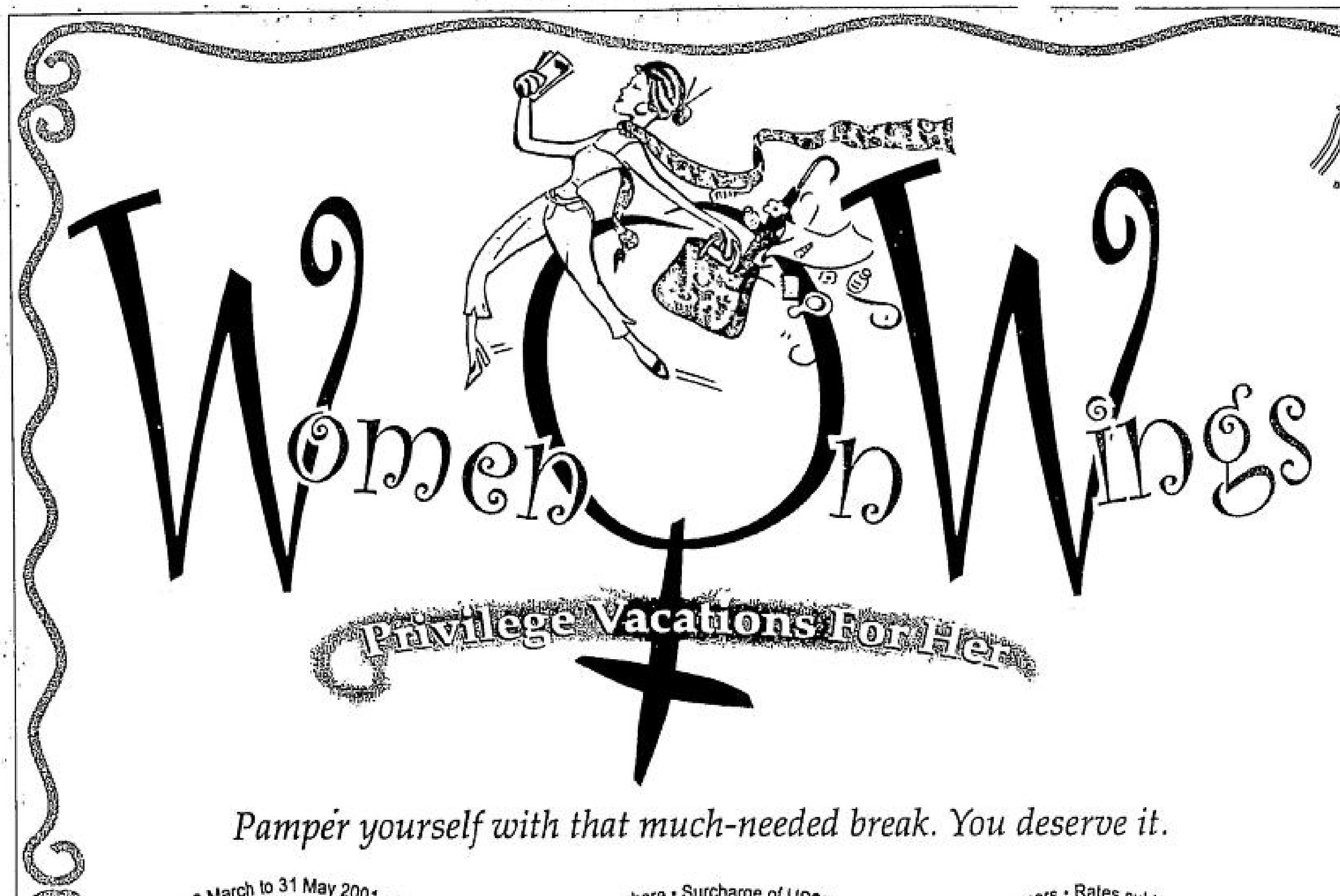
All packages include roundtrip airfare on Singapore Airlines' new Economy class, hotel accommodation, energizing daily American breakfasts, worry-free roundtrip airport transfers, guided city tours, special gifts from Singapore Airlines like an exclusive Batik umbrella and one-year subscription to METRO Magazine... and lots of "do-as-you-please" hours of fun, shopping, maybe even soul-searching.

Those who want to take the privilege promotion to Singapore can join the half-day tour of the city. Another plus is the chance to catch Asia's biggest musical event of the year - the Singapore International Jazz Festival which will be held from May 18 to 20 at Suntec City. (Tickets are available from $50 per person.)

The loveliest part of the Women On Wings Privilege Promotion is the most relaxing beauty and health spa treatment* that comes with it. Indulge in any one of the sweet-smelling aromatherapy treatments*, stress-releasing massages, natural herbal scrubs, exhilarating seaweed wraps, invigorating flower baths or rejuvenating facials. Singapore Airlines' Women On Wings is a truly great way to unwind... and recharge! (*Treatments vary according to four destinations.)*

To top it all, rest assured you will be pampered by the world-renowned inflight services offered on Singapore Airlines' new economy class — from the mouth-watering choice of menus, free-flowing champagne, to the state-of-the-art audio-video entertainment system (KrisWorld).

So - all women unite! Call your lady friends now. Guys can come along too at an additional charge of course. For more information or for ticketing, please get in touch with your favorite Travel Agents or contact the SIA Tours Desk at 8104960 locals 4005 and 4006 or at 7515151 to 52. Women, like you, should definitely ride on the wings of fun!



Pamper yourself with that much-needed break. You deserve it.

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- **4-day/3-night** hotel & transfers
- Daily **American breakfast**
- Half-day **guided tour**
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- Daily **American breakfast**
- Half-day **guided tour**
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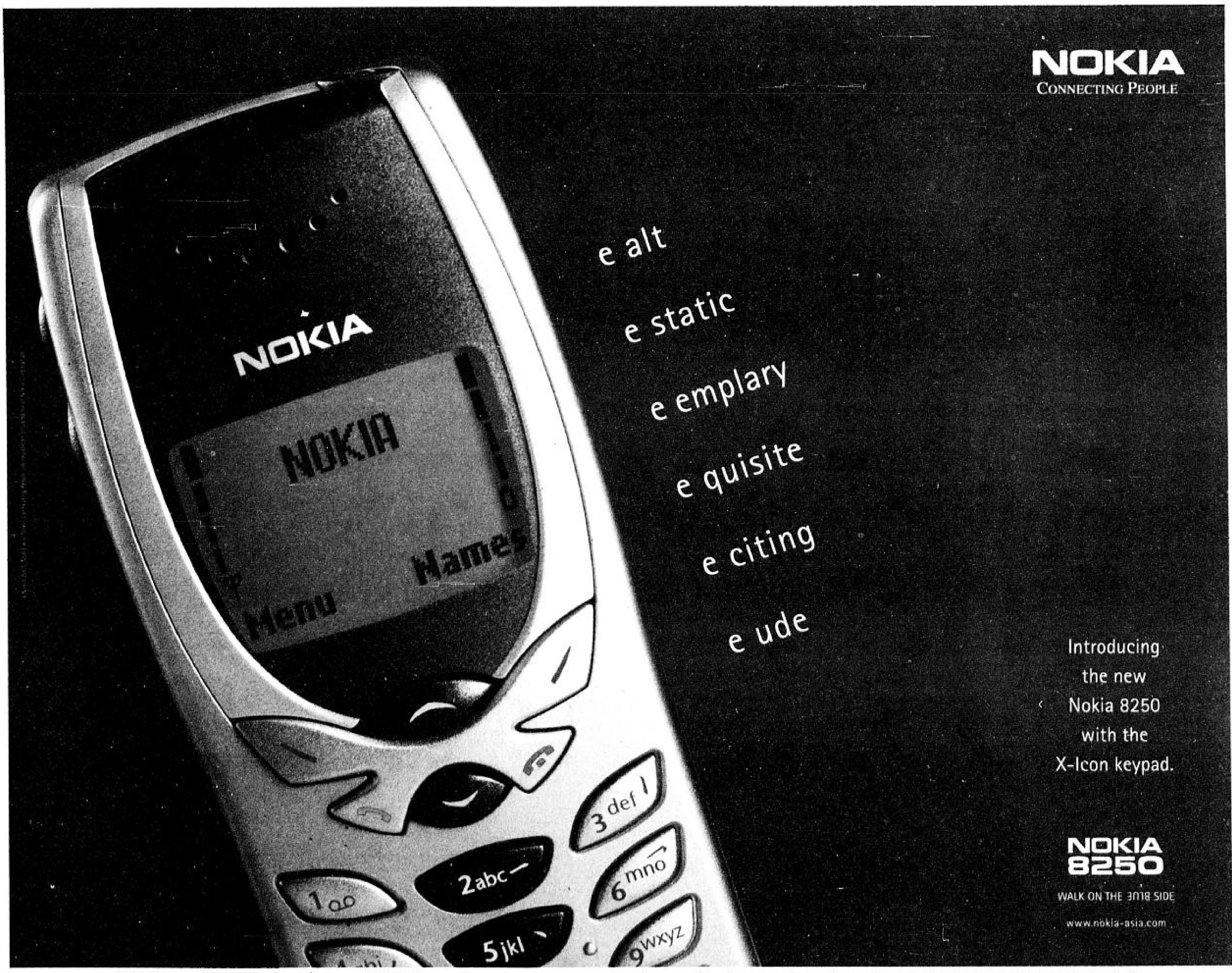

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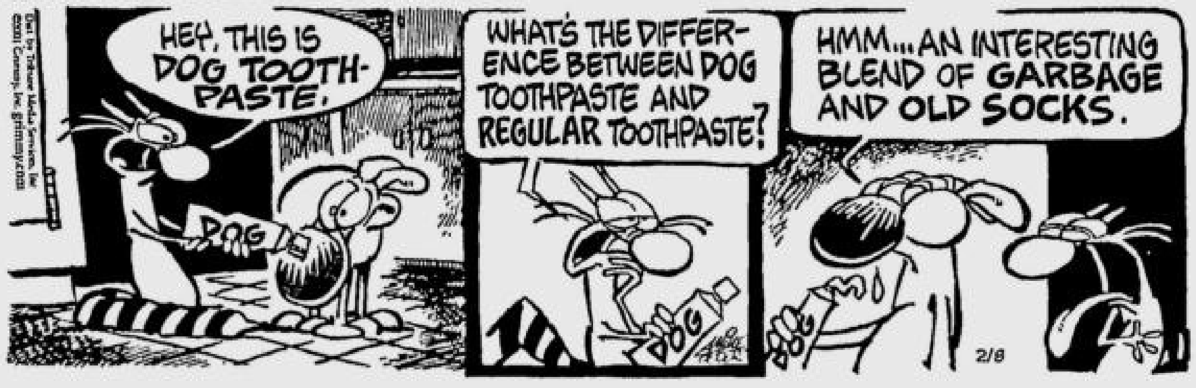
# ComicRelief

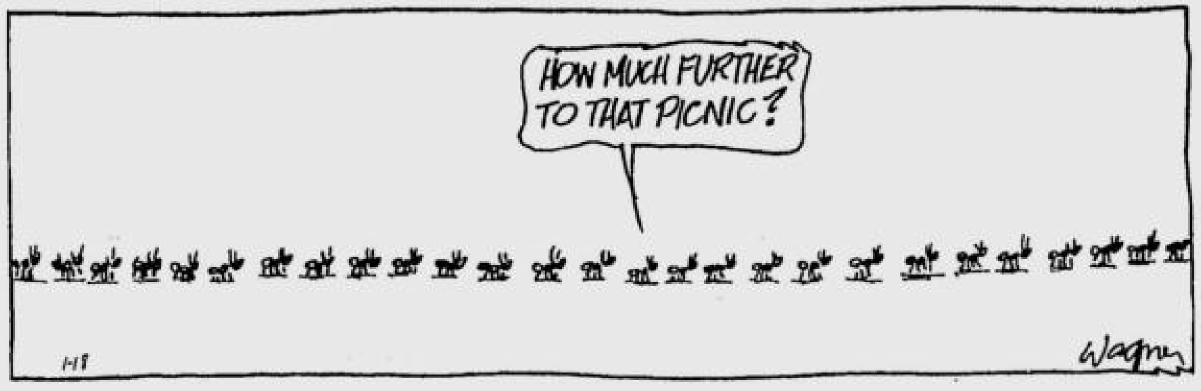
## MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


HEY, THIS IS DOG TOOTHPASTE.
DOG
WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DOG TOOTHPASTE AND REGULAR TOOTHPASTE?
HMM...AN INTERESTING BLEND OF GARBAGE AND OLD SOCKS.
DOG
2/8

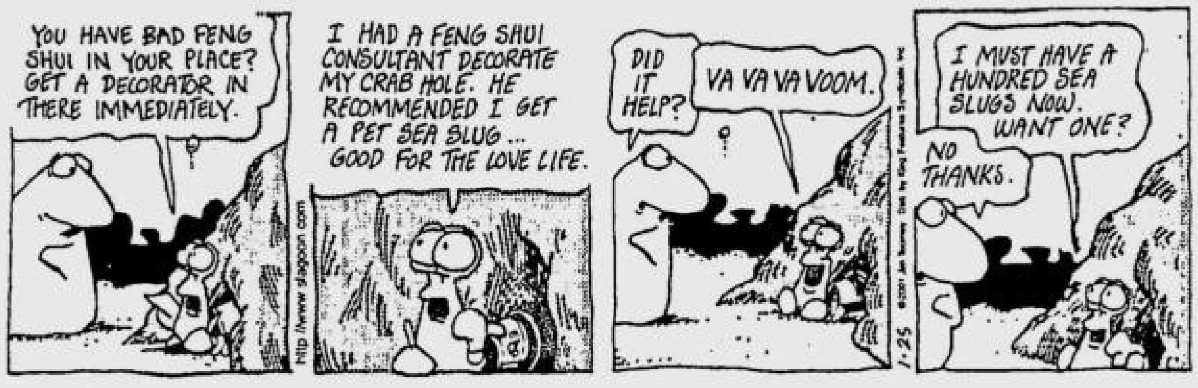
## ANIMAL CRACKER

BY FRED WAGNER


HOW MUCH FURTHER TO THAT PICNIC?
1-18
Wagner

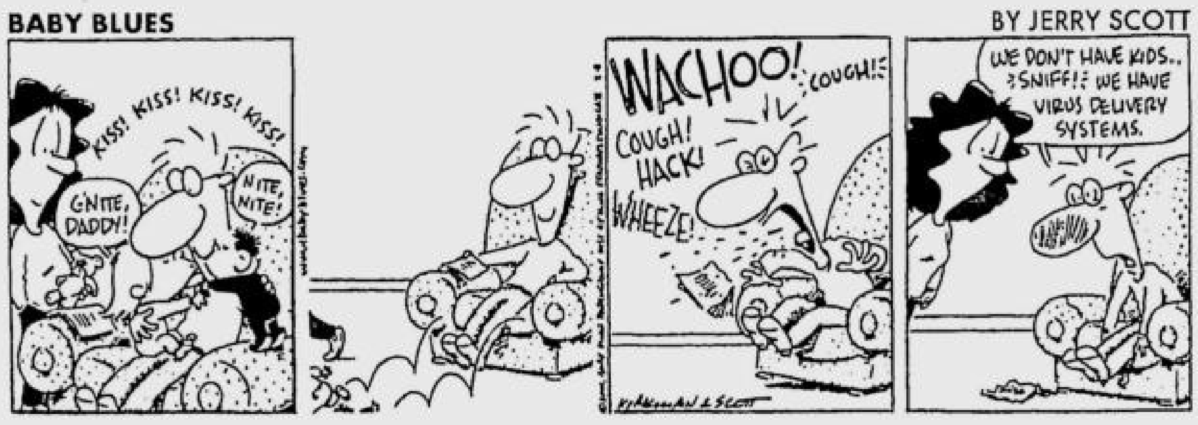
## SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


YOU HAVE BAD FENG SHUI IN YOUR PLACE? GET A DECORATOR IN THERE IMMEDIATELY.
I HAD A FENG SHUI CONSULTANT DECORATE MY CRAB HOLE. HE RECOMMENDED I GET A PET SEA SLUG... GOOD FOR THE LOVE LIFE.
http://www.slagoon.com
DID IT HELP?
VA VA VA VOOM.
1-25
I MUST HAVE A HUNDRED SEA SLUGS NOW. WANT ONE?
NO THANKS.

## BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


KISS! KISS! KISS! KISS!
G'NITE, DADDY!
NITE, NITE!
WACHOO!
COUGH!
COUGH! HACK!
WHEEZE!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT
WE DON'T HAVE KIDS.. SNIFF! WE HAVE VIRUS DELIVERY SYSTEMS.

## HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:** Freddie Prinze Jr., James Van Der Beek, Lynn Redgrave, Mavor Moore, Cyd Charisse

**Happy Birthday:** If you want to make changes, this is the year. Start to make your moves. This can be a pivotal period if you are true to yourself. Re-evaluate your desires and do whatever is necessary to capture your dreams. Be prepared to go the distance or you will be unhappy with your performance. Your numbers: 13, 19, 26, 31, 35, 44

**ARIES (March 21-April 19):** You will do well in speculative money matters. Spend some time with children and don't forget to keep in shape. You have the energy to juggle a wide variety of activities.

**TAURUS (April 20-May 20):** Avoid romantic involvement with co-workers and look elsewhere for love. Redecorating will cost more than you want to spend. Emotional uncertainties will make communication with your spouse difficult.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 20):** Projects that involve telemarketing or mail order should be of interest to you. Look into the possibilities of starting your own small business. A relative may back your idea.

**CANCER (June 21-July 22):** Don't let older relatives or siblings put demands on you. Do what you can, but don't feel guilty if you can't do it all. Your need to collect things will cause grief.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22):** Romantic encounters will develop through social events or fitness programs. You will make profits through investments. Popularity will be yours if you place yourself in the limelight.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22):** Your anger may lead you in the wrong direction. Don't jump to conclusions. Think twice before you retaliate. You are unlikely to get along with co-workers or impress your boss today.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22):** Ask for favors, as long as you don't require help with legal matters. Take time to connect with people who will appreciate your talents. Look into making some extra cash. Flirting will bother your mate.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21):** Your lover will cost you financially if you allow it. You will have to learn to say no if you don't want to end up broke and alone. You are losing respect by giving in all the time.

**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21):** You just can't keep your mind on your work. You should be looking into foreign cultures or philosophies that can broaden your horizons about life, love and happiness.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19):** You can expect to have problems with your lover. Do not allow him or her to take advantage of you during your confusion about the relationship. Ask point-blank where you stand.

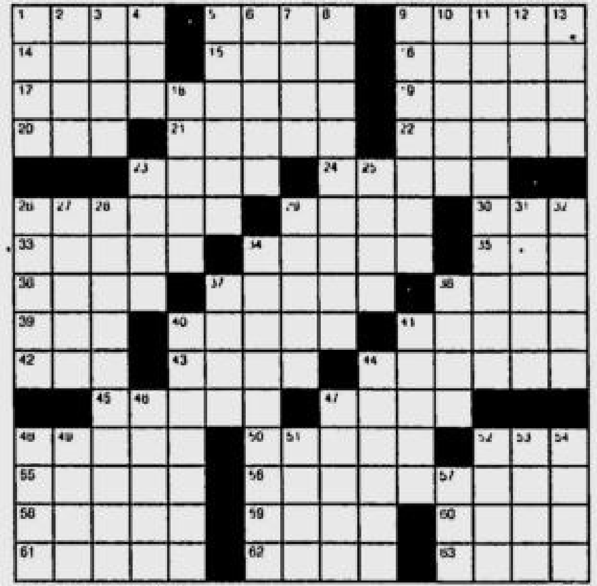
**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18):** Romantic opportunities will be plentiful. However, you must be careful you don't pick someone who is more interested in what you have than who you are.

**PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20):** It's a good time to make career changes. Interviews will go well. Your warmth and genuine character will win you points. You can use your unusual ideas to show your versatility.

**Birthday Baby:** You have two sides: One is sensitive and warm, and the other aloof and secretive. You can be outgoing and fun, but sometimes you prefer to be quiet and demure. You keep others guessing and attract attention because of your mysterious ways.

## DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Frances Burton
Summerville, GA

1/23/01

ACROSS
1 Stoic Roman
5 Tangled masses
9 English racecourse
14 __ Khayyam
15 Touched down
16 Rounded swelling
17 Farmer, to a cowpoke
19 Love Italian-style
20 Cobb and Hardin
21 The ones here
22 Loads cargo
23 Spin follower?
24 Time period
26 Phoned
29 Knock for a loop
30 Take one's pick
33 During a broadcast
34 Mother-of-pearl
35 In favor of
36 __ it the truth?
37 Conductive element
38 Recognize
39 Inc. in London
40 Planter
41 Martin of "L.A. Story"
42 Actor Mineo
43 Foundry form
44 Sounded stridently
45 Oneness
47 Lamentation
48 Explorer Sebastian
50 "__ Up, Doc?"
52 Actress Farrow
55 Planetary path
56 Man, to a Martian
58 Della of song
59 Caper
60 Exhort
61 Actress Black
62 Willowy
63 Launch forces

DOWN
1 Toll
2 Island off China
3 Young 'uns
4 Powerful sphere
5 Converted into pulp
6 Modify
7 Draws
8 Tennessee Williams play, "A __ Named Desire"
9 Sea otter's meal
10 Poisonous shrub
11 Bumpkin, to a city slicker
12 Hideous creature
13 Pipe fittings
18 Say out loud
23 Skirt opening
25 Sound of rippling water
26 Embers
27 Baker or Pointer
28 Non-seaman, to a seaman
29 Glutted
31 Verify
32 Lugged
34 Honeymooners
37 Arguable
38 Ollie's partner
40 Infatuated
41 Virgule
44 Low point
46 Cacophony
47 __ Gras
48 Wine stopper
49 Type of rug or code
51 Frozen drops
52 Bog
53 "Picnic" dramatist
54 Matures
57 Loutish fellow

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Y | O | K | E | | S | P | O | K | E | | B | A | L | M |
| A | R | I | L | | C | A | P | O | N | | A | S | I | A |
| L | A | S | S | | A | G | E | N | T | | R | E | N | D |
| E | N | S | | O | R | A | N | G | E | C | R | A | T | E |
| | | M | A | V | E | N | S | | N | E | E | | | |
| S | P | E | W | E | D | | | S | T | I | N | G | E | R |
| A | I | K | E | N | | H | O | T | E | L | | O | L | E |
| P | E | A | S | | B | O | N | E | S | | O | L | D | E |
| O | C | T | | K | A | S | E | M | | E | N | D | E | D |
| R | E | E | R | E | C | T | | | A | R | T | E | R | Y |
| | | | I | R | K | | C | A | L | L | O | N | | |
| D | E | M | O | N | S | T | R | A | T | E | | G | I | G |
| E | X | I | T | | L | O | I | R | E | | W | A | D | E |
| E | P | E | E | | A | R | M | O | R | | E | T | O | N |
| P | O | N | D | | P | E | E | N | S | | B | E | L | T |

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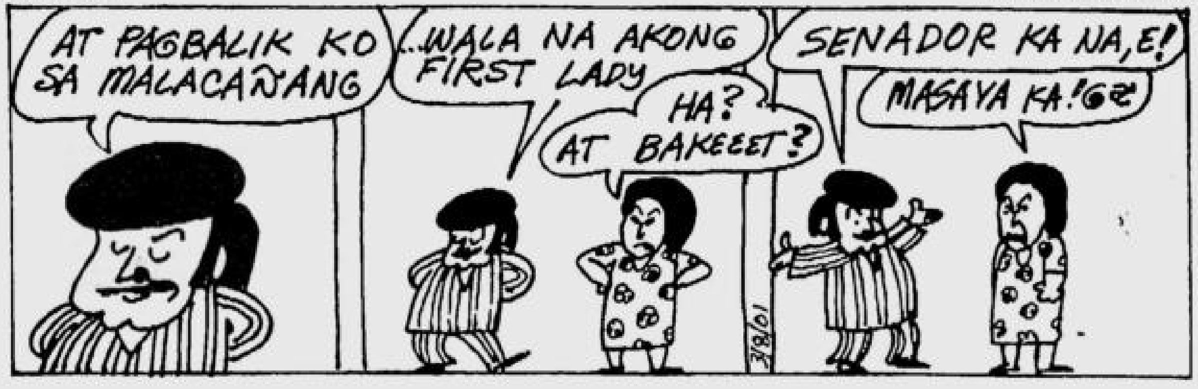
1/23/01

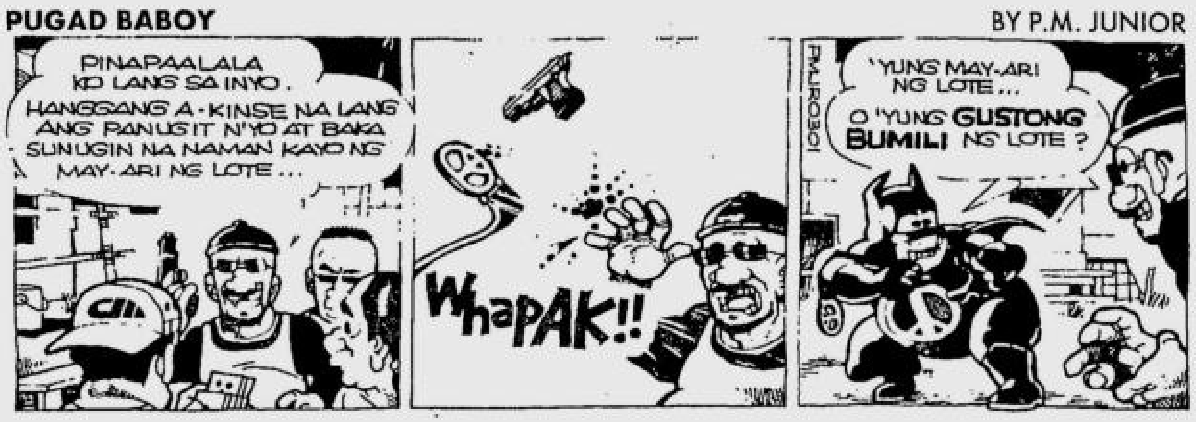
## A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


AT PAGBALIK KO SA MALACAÑANG
..WALA NA AKONG FIRST LADY
HA? AT BAKEEET?
3/8/01
SENADOR KA NA, E!
MASAYA KA!

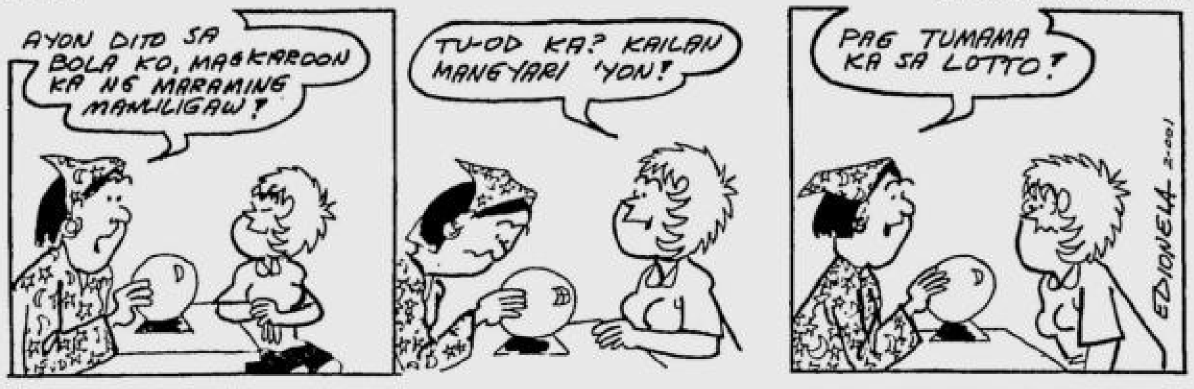
## PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PINAPAALALA KO LANG SA INYO. HANGGANG A-KINSE NA LANG ANG PANUGIT N'YO AT BAKA SUNUGIN NA NAMAN KAYO NG MAY-ARI NG LOTE...
WhapAK!!
PMJ030301
'YUNG MAY-ARI NG LOTE... O 'YUNG GUSTONG BUMILI NG LOTE?

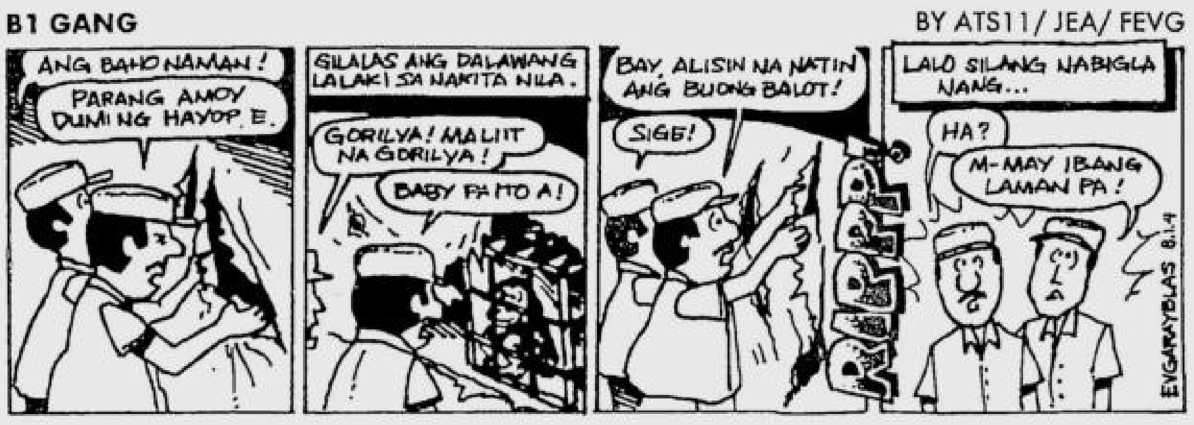
## SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


AYON DITO SA BOLA KO, MAGKAROON KA NG MARAMING MANLILIGAW?
TU-OD KA? KAILAN MANGYARI 'YON?
PAG TUMAMA KA SA LOTTO?
EDIONELA 2-001

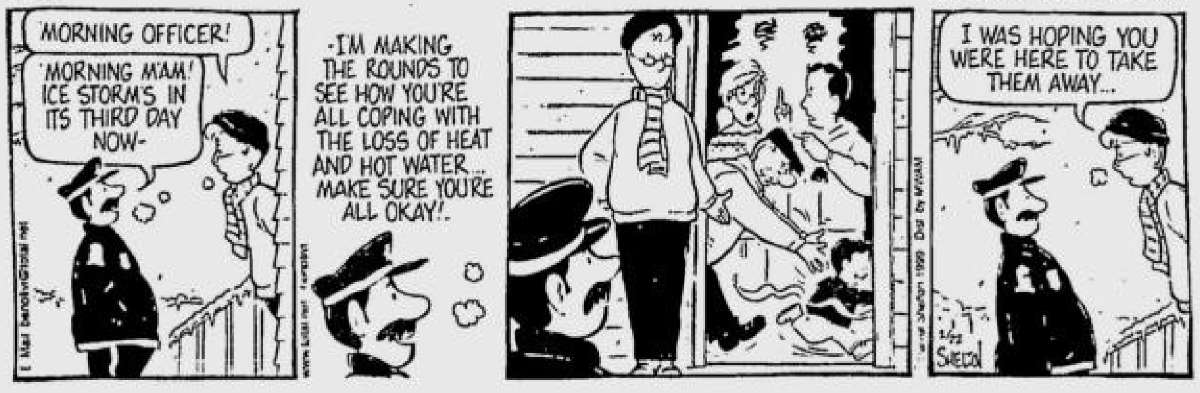
## B1 GANG

BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


ANG BAHO NAMAN!
PARANG AMOY DUMI NG HAYOP E.
GILALAS ANG DALAWANG LALAKI SA NAKITA NILA.
GORILYA! MALIIT NA GORILYA!
BABY PA ITO A!
BAY, ALISIN NA NATIN ANG BUONG BALOT!
SIGE!
LALO SILANG NABIGLA NANG...
HA?
M-MAY IBANG LAMAN PA!
EVGARAYBLAS 8.1.4

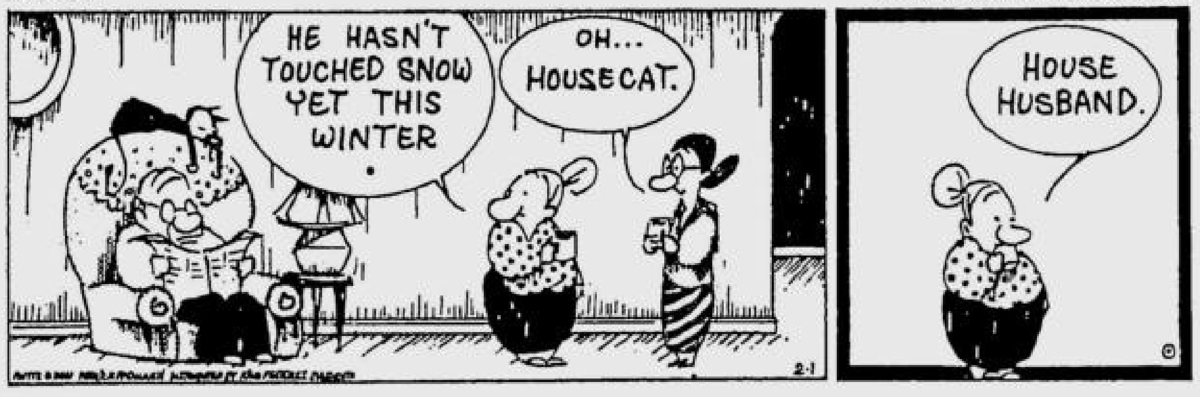
## BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


MORNING OFFICER!
MORNING MA'AM! ICE STORM'S IN ITS THIRD DAY NOW-
-I'M MAKING THE ROUNDS TO SEE HOW YOU'RE ALL COPING WITH THE LOSS OF HEAT AND HOT WATER... MAKE SURE YOU'RE ALL OKAY!.
I WAS HOPING YOU WERE HERE TO TAKE THEM AWAY...
SHELDON

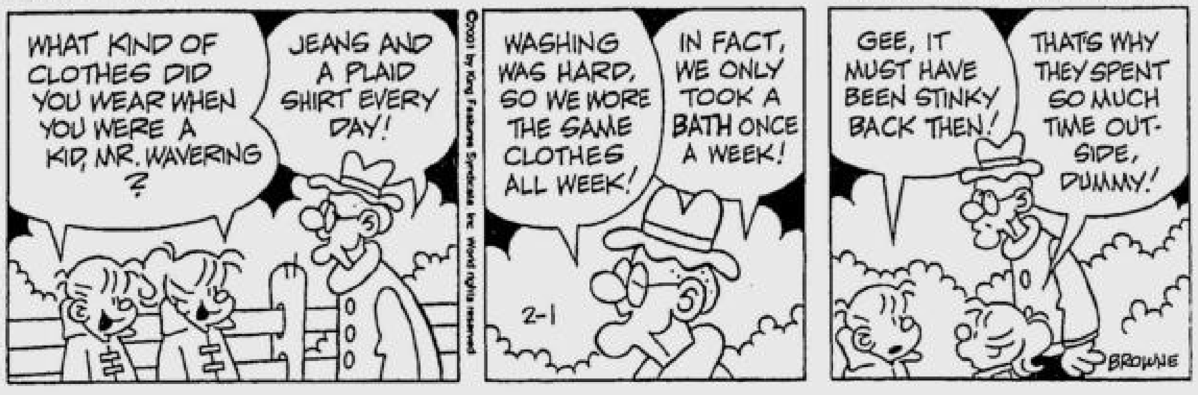
## MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HE HASN'T TOUCHED SNOW YET THIS WINTER.
OH... HOUSECAT.
2-1
HOUSE HUSBAND.

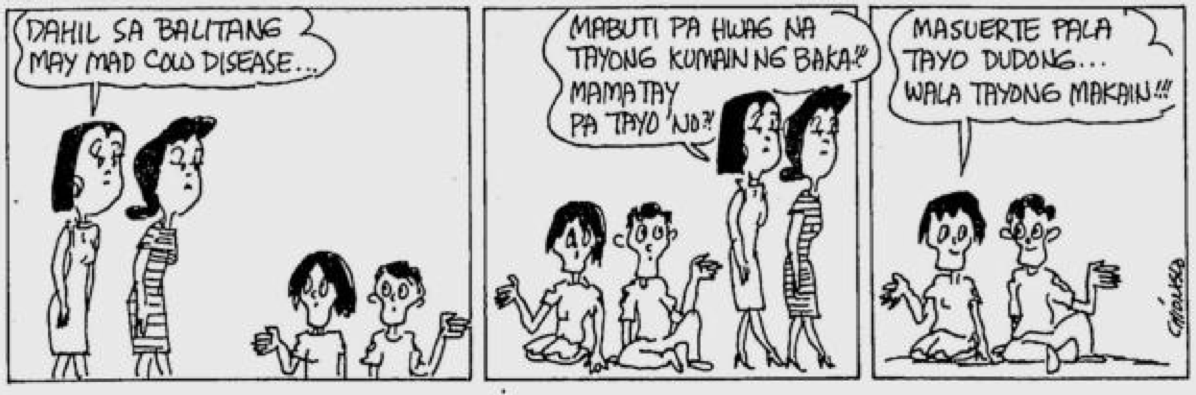
## HI AND LOIS

BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


WHAT KIND OF CLOTHES DID YOU WEAR WHEN YOU WERE A KID, MR. WAVERING?
JEANS AND A PLAID SHIRT EVERY DAY!
©2001 by King Features Syndicate, Inc. World rights reserved.
WASHING WAS HARD, SO WE WORE THE SAME CLOTHES ALL WEEK!
IN FACT, WE ONLY TOOK A BATH ONCE A WEEK!
2-1
GEE, IT MUST HAVE BEEN STINKY BACK THEN!
THAT'S WHY THEY SPENT SO MUCH TIME OUTSIDE, DUMMY!
BROWNE

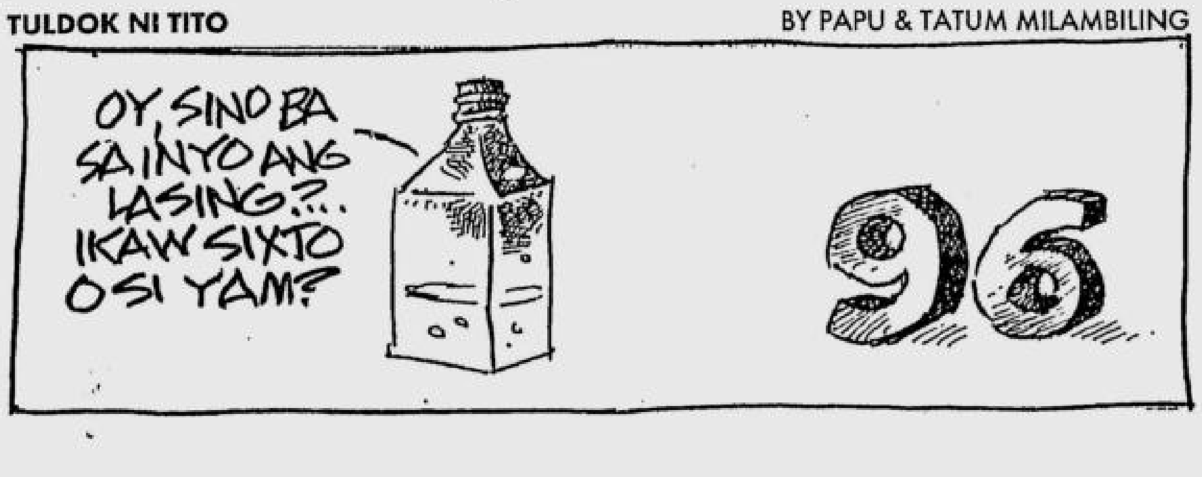
## LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DAHIL SA BALITANG MAY MAD COW DISEASE...
MABUTI PA HWAG NA TAYONG KUMAIN NG BAKA!! MAMATAY PA TAYO 'NO?!
MASUERTE PALA TAYO DUDONG... WALA TAYONG MAKAIN!!!
CHIONGLO

## TULDOK NI TITO

BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


OY, SINO BA SA INYO ANG LASING?... IKAW SIXTO O SI YAM?
96

# Chef's honor

**THE MAD TEA PARTY**

*Clinton Palanca*

Vatel, the subject of the French entry to last year's Cannes Film Festival, took his cooking too seriously; unable to feed his guests properly, he killed himself

ONE perfect evening in Paris, we strolled out of the Laduree tearooms on the Champs-Elysees, where we had feasted on sole, veal kidneys and pistachio macaroons, and decided that, in order to expand our vocabulary to keep up with our girth, we should watch a French film. I must admit that I have a secret fondness for French films, which are terribly out of vogue these days: all those well-dressed men and women wandering in and out of high-ceilinged rooms, talking incessantly, interspersed with humid sepia love scenes and an ending that comes abruptly just when you thought the story was beginning to get rolling.

The film we ended up watching was the French entry to the Cannes Film Festival of last year; and to our pleasant surprise, the soundtrack was in English, with a screenplay written by no less than Tom Stoppard, one of my favorite playwrights ("Rosencrantz" and "Guildenstern Are Dead," "The Real Thing" and, more recently, "Shakespeare in Love"). The movie, which I hope will inch its way to our shores, was called "Vatel," and it is one of the most beautiful and poignant films I have seen to date.

For those who can read French, there is a very erudite and comprehensive book about this individual, called "Vatel Et La Naissance de la Gastronomie." If you can find it, please read it and then tell me what it says, or you can borrow my copy, which is presently sitting on my cookbook shelf in my library in order to impress girls. In the meantime, there's a short entry about him in the Larousse Gastronomique: of Swiss origin, he was born in Paris in 1635; he was employed at the Chateau of Chantilly not so much as a cook but as a majordomo, in charge of the food-related affairs of the household of the Prince de Conde; but it was his death, in 1671, which is most notable about this man's life.

## Under pressure

Vatel (in the film, played by Gerard Depardieu) was placed in charge of a three-day feast to be given in honor of Louis XIV, the Sun King (played by Tim Roth), with 3,000 guests in attendance. He was barely holding up under the pressure; in the movie, his hectic schedule was further complicated by occasional trysts with a very creamy and long-legged Uma Thurman (it is, after all, a French film), who happened to be the king's mistress as well. The fireworks on the second night were spoiled by poor weather conditions. On the third day, the theme of which was to be nautical, the fish failed to arrive. Unable to live with his humiliation, he went up to his room and impaled himself on his sword. A few minutes later, the carts of fish rumbled up to the gates of the chateau.

SCENES from "Vatel"

The name of Vatel, thereafter, became symbolic of the honor of a chef: if you can't feed your guests properly, then you must kill yourself instead. (Perhaps we may note, interjectorily, that there are many chefs in Manila whom we wish would follow the example of the great Vatel.) The concept sounds noble, in the best tradition of Japanese prime ministers and the like: honor and pride in one's metier, the artist who sacrifices himself for the cause of his work and for art itself; the names of Hemingway and Mishima and Van Gogh come to mind.

But it is the myth of Vatel itself that the movie takes on and deconstructs, and, consequently, that of the honor of the artist. It is particularly apropos that cooking is the art in question, because it is one that continuously treads the line between a "mere" craft (a set of skills to be learned) and art (an expression of individual self and consciousness). We believe in artists, and give them our adulation; we believe them to be inspired (literally, "to breathe in") by a higher consciousness, to be possessed of noble truths. We search for ourselves in the poetry of Rilke, in the novels of Balzac, in the music of Kurt Cobain. Up to the first half of this century, children grew up dreaming of becoming writers, just as in the '70s, teenagers thrashed on broomsticks dreaming of becoming rock stars.

I grew up believing these myths that inspired my decision to become a writer and join the artists in their eyrie, rather than be a mere cog in the mechanisms of society. "Ours," I thought to myself, "is a high and lonely destiny." But it would be filled with clarity of vision, with nobility and truth.

And yet, in the movie, Vatel learns that his master, the Prince de Conde, sold him off to the King as part of his stake in a card game; and it is then that he, Vatel, realizes his position all along: despite all his grand pretensions as an artist, he is nothing more to his master than a servant. A fine servant, perhaps, and one who provides transcendental food and magical amusements, but a servant nonetheless.

## Ring of truth

Okay, perhaps it is a cynical interpretation of a merely tragic film. Or perhaps the film is itself cynical, a late-20th-century elegy for the once-lofty position of the artist. But it has the uncomfortable ring of truth, especially when thought of in terms of our society.

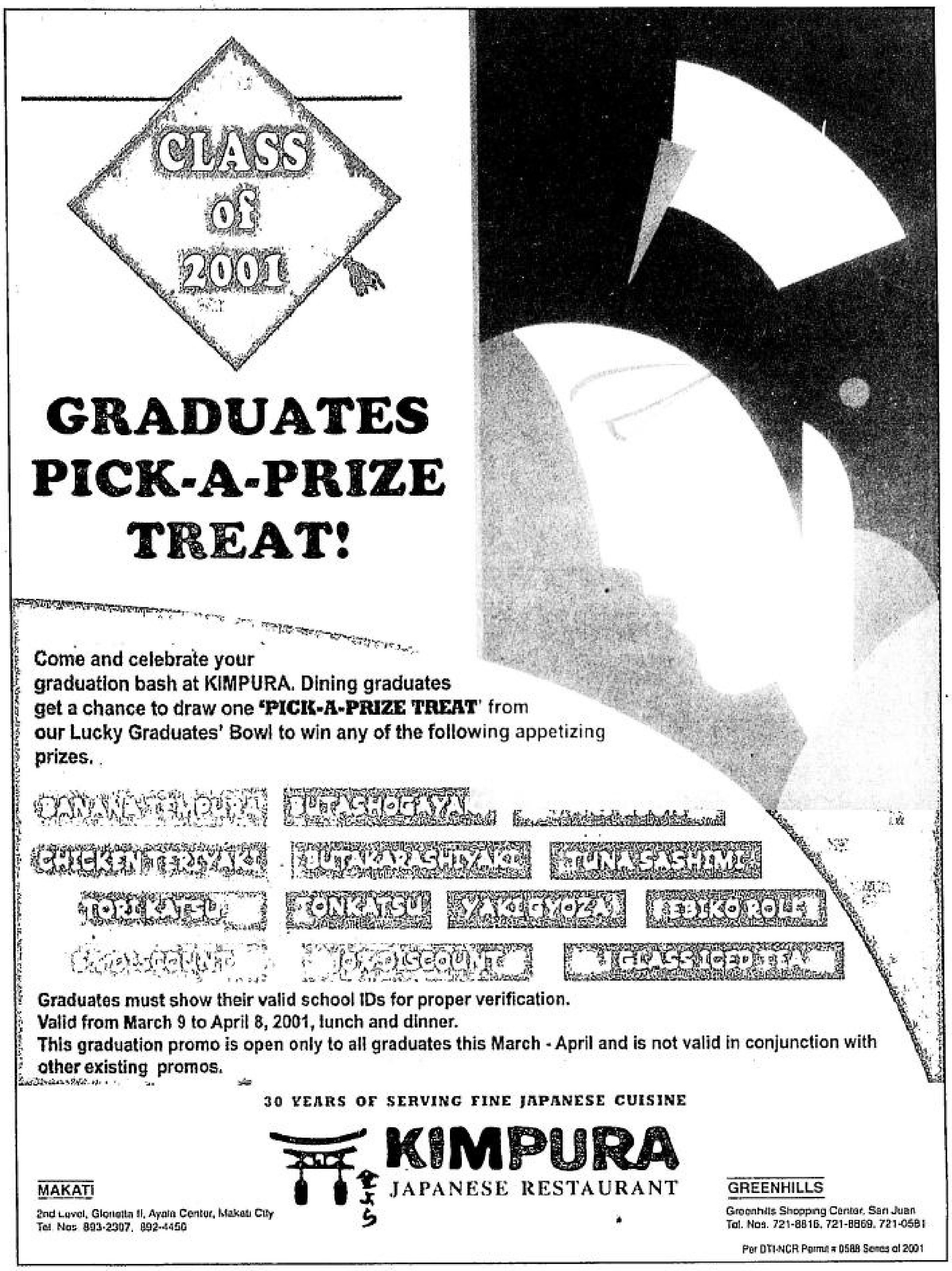
Fine artists in our country may believe that their canvasses express the existential state of their tortured souls, but the women who buy them do so on the basis of how large the canvas is and how well it blends with the color schemes of their room. Stage artists rehearse for months for a single night's performance, an evening's entertainment that leaves the consciousness of the audience the moment they attempt to decide where to go for drinks afterward. And as for writers, their poems and stories are just there for decorative accents; their real purpose in society is as endless churners of speeches for politicians and ad copy for products. And chefs? They just put food on the table.

Make no mistake: painters will be praised, musicians applauded, writers quoted, and chefs bandied about in chic society ("Oh, have you tried the newest restaurant..."); but our service to society is not the provision of noble truths, but to cover empty wall space and provide entertainment. Like jugglers, fire-eaters and lion-tamers, we are amusing diversions to the real truths of life, be they less noble and lofty-sounding.

It was one of those late spring evenings that stayed light well into the night; we waited for a taxi in the gathering dusk, silent and troubled. We had each, in our own way, chosen the life of an artist; and for at least some of us, there was no turning back. Vatel, in the movie, had impaled himself at the realization that all his glory lay in his servitude. For all of those who believe that being an artist somehow sets you above the crowd, verily I say unto you: remember Vatel. Listen closely, and you will hear the rumble of those fish carts outside your window.

*Please badger the local film distributors to show* Vatel, *even briefly, in movie theaters. Otherwise, you can find it at www.amazon.fr; the DVD version has the English soundtrack.*

*E-mail the author at clinton@i-manila.com.ph.*



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TUNA SASHIMI
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YAKI GYOZA
EBIKO ROLL
[illegible] DISCOUNT
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Valid from March 9 to April 8, 2001, lunch and dinner.
This graduation promo is open only to all graduates this March - April and is not valid in conjunction with other existing promos.

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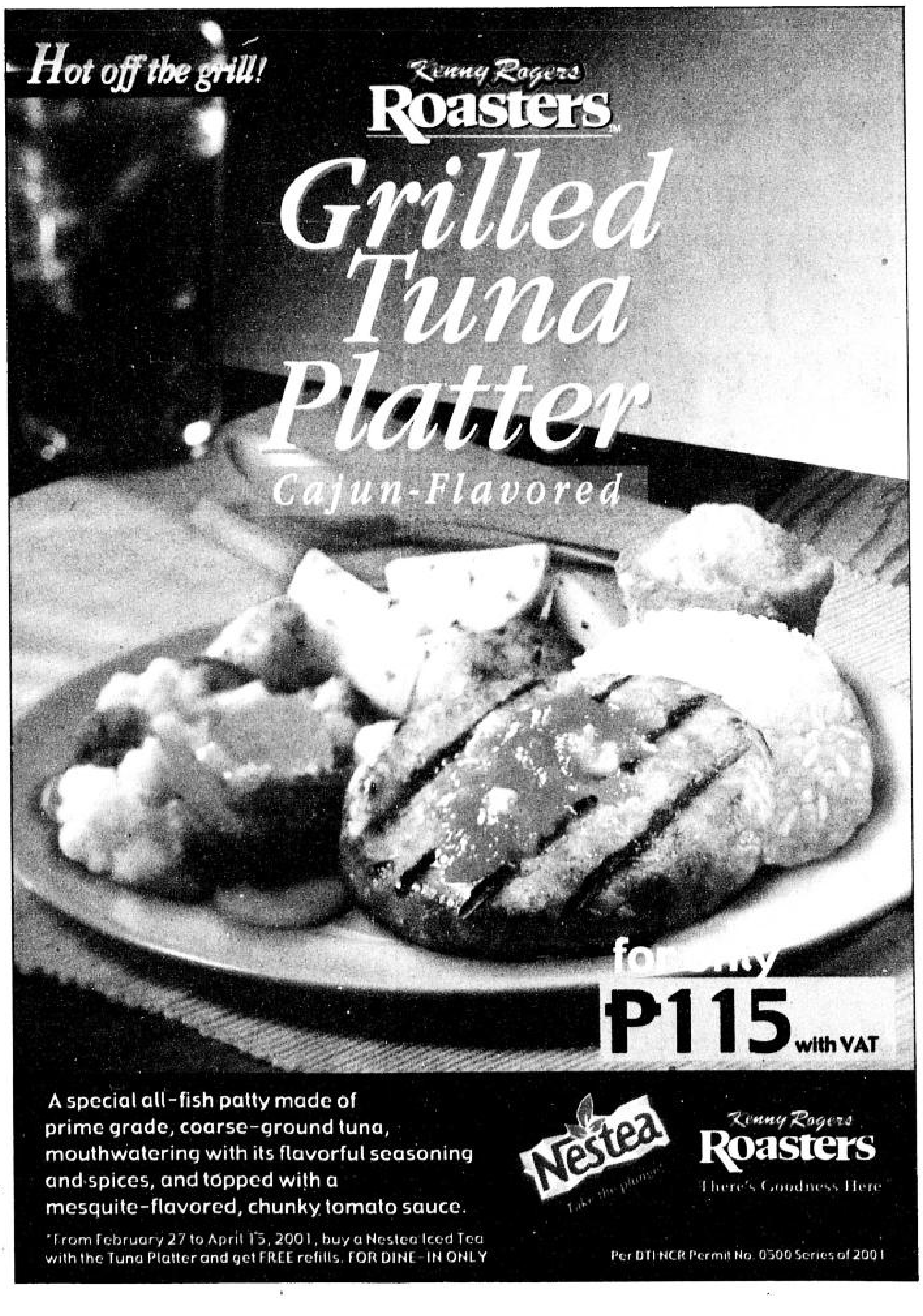
Per DTI-NCR Permit # 0588 Series of 2001



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Kenny Rogers
Roasters

Grilled Tuna Platter
Cajun-Flavored

for only
P115 with VAT

A special all-fish patty made of prime grade, coarse-ground tuna, mouthwatering with its flavorful seasoning and spices, and topped with a mesquite-flavored, chunky tomato sauce.

*From February 27 to April 15, 2001, buy a Nestea Iced Tea with the Tuna Platter and get FREE refills. FOR DINE-IN ONLY

Nestea
Take the plunge

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Roasters
There's Goodness Here

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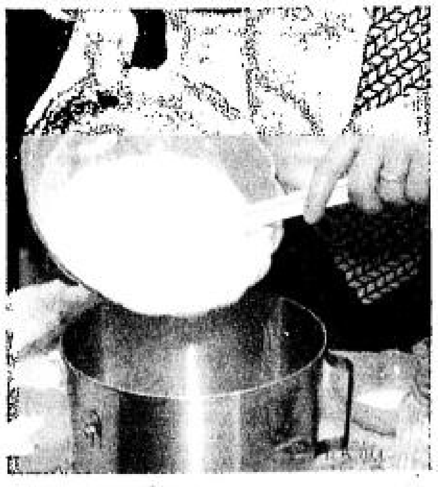
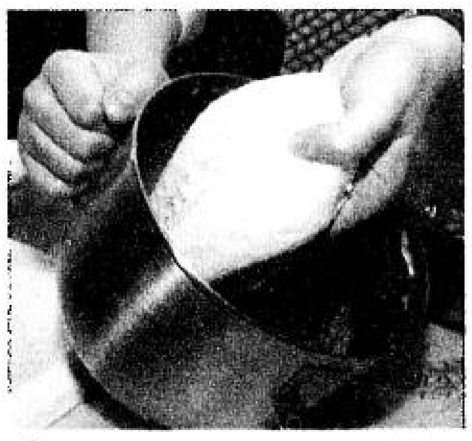
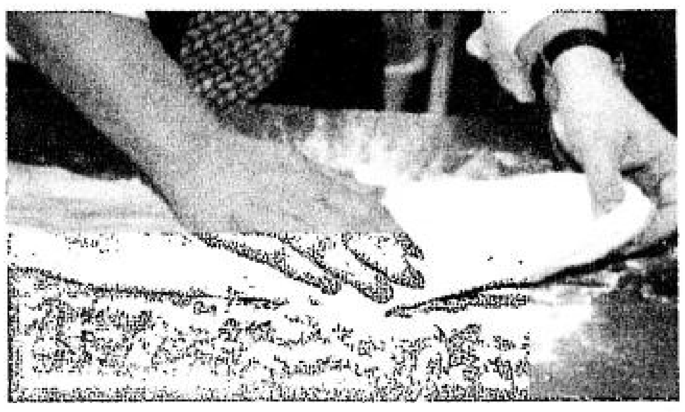


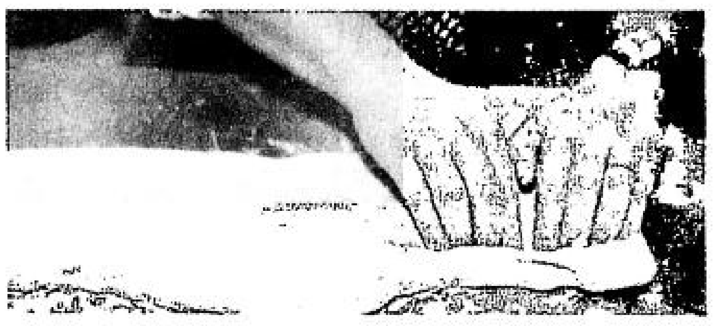
**1 PUT** all ingredients in a mixing bowl. Mix well.



**4 TRANSFER** risen dough to lightly floured surface. Punch down dough to remove air.



**5 FLATTEN** with your hand and stretch to form a rectangular dough (30x5")



**6 TO FORM** into a *baston* or rod-shape dough, use four fingers of each hand to press down dough, starting from the top and then moving from left to right. Continue doing this until an elongated dough is achieved.

# Our daily bread

By Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Betoy Johnson

TIRED of buying macaroon-sized *pan de sal* at croissant prices? Why not make your own freshly baked *pan de sal* in the size of your choice right in the comforts of your kitchen? This way, you are also confident that your piping hot buns are clean and safe to eat, with no preservatives and bromate-free.

Johnlu Koa, the man behind French Baker, offers an easy-to-do recipe of *pan de sal*, a Spanish term for salted bread. His version is easier to follow than we thought. You will need two-and-half hours for preparation and 15 minutes for baking. You can prepare the dough ahead of time and keep it in the chiller for weeks if you don't intend to use it right away. The dough can also be frozen for one month. When it's time for baking, just take it out of the ref, let it thaw, knead again, roll out the dough, cut it and bake it.

**STEP BY STEP**

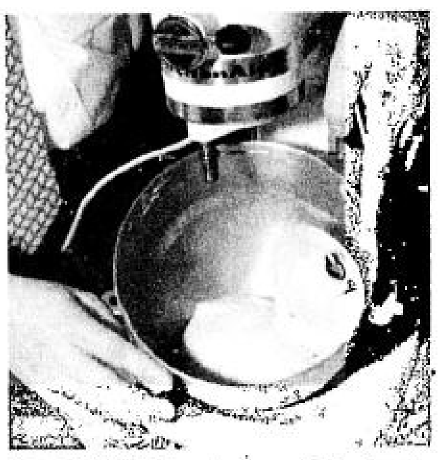
You can also make your *pan de sal* as soft as a chiffon cake if you let the dough rise for more than an hour before baking. Otherwise, it becomes *pan de sal sa putok*, also a popular bread in most neighborhood bakeries.

French Baker has been known for its wide selection of bread and pastries, including bagels, croissants, and baguettes, but its all time-bestsellers are the whole wheat *pan de sal*. It recently opened its 22nd outlet at Pioneer Center on Pioneer Street, Pasig.

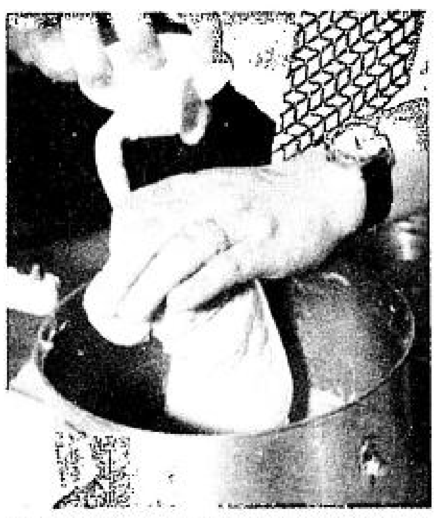
In this recipe, Johnlu uses a mixer with dough hook attachment for mixing the dough—first, at a slow pace for two minutes and, second, at a fast pace at eight minutes. If you don't have the said equipment, you can use any heavy-duty electric mixer. If you don't have a mixer but have the stamina to mix for a long period of time, you can blend the dough with a wooden spoon.

**Ingredients**
2 tsp instant yeast
2 tbsp refined sugar
2 tbsp vegetable shortening
1 ½ c water (at room temperature)
1 tsp refined salt
4 ½ c bread flour
Extra flour and breadcrumbs for sprinkling on dough as needed

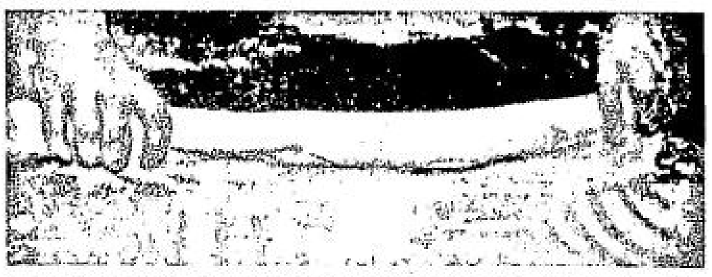
*If you have suggestions for step-by-step, please e-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer. com.ph*



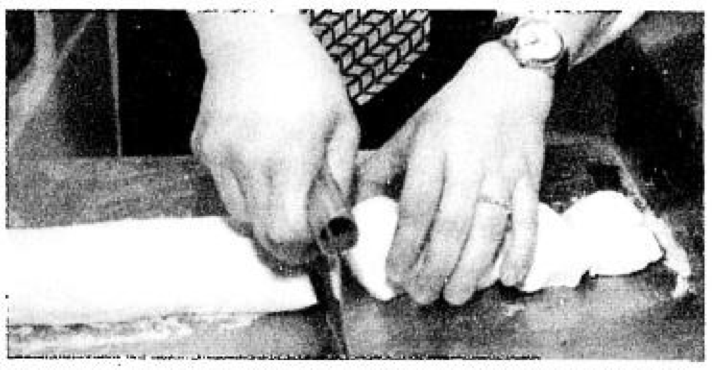
**2 REMOVE** dough from mixing bowl and sprinkle with extra flour so that dough does not become too sticky to handle. Gather the dough into a ball-like mass.



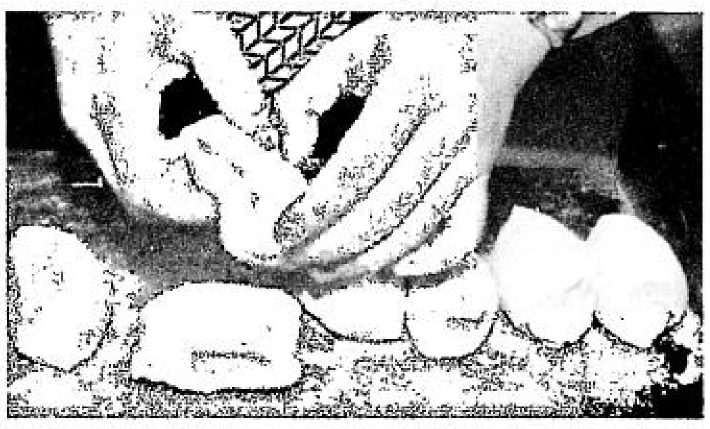
**3 TRANSFER** to a greased bowl and cover with plastic or dry cloth. Let dough rise for one hour to allow the dough to double in volume.



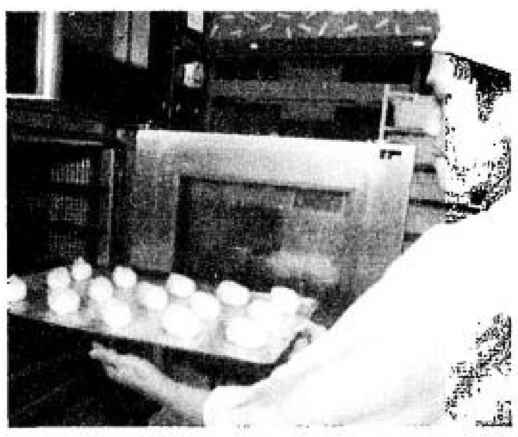
**7 ROLL** out dough further by using the palm of your hand to create a consistent diameter. Sprinkle breadcrumbs generously and cover dough with plastic or dry cloth and let rise for 30 minutes. Dough is expected to grow larger and fluffier.



**8 USING** a metal rectangular cutter, cut dough into 15 equal pieces, roughly 2" wide.



**9 DUST** cut dough with breadcrumbs. Transfer to a baking sheet cut side up. Let rise for one hour or until dough becomes light.



**10 BAKE** in preheated oven, 350°F or 189°C (moderate heat) for 12 minutes or until golden brown.

**11 SERVE** with favorite spread for breakfast and *merienda*.

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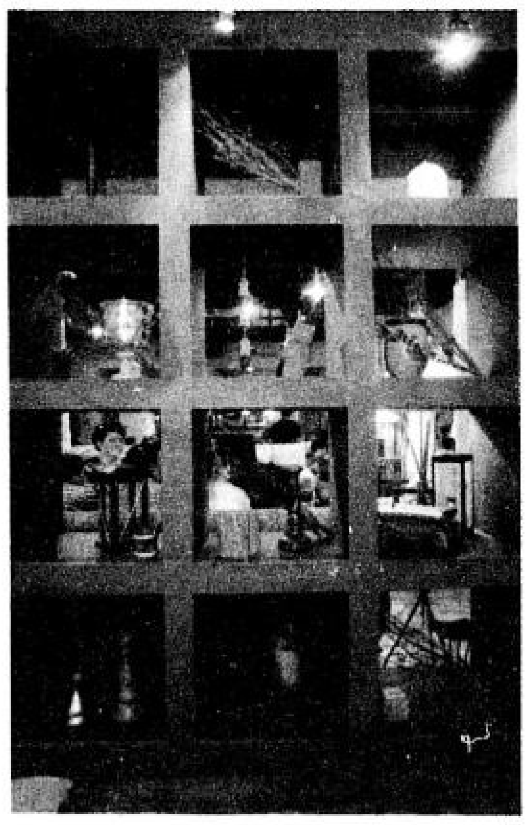
# Out of Africa

(From page C8)



**SEE-THROUGH WALL.** Display shelves by the foyer area give newly arrived guests a glimpse of who's who at the first elevated lounge.

display shelves filled with a variety of accent pieces allow arriving guests to see through the first of Moomba's elevated lounges.

Creativity is written in the details. Printed drapes in rust and cream, for instance, alternate with natural jute sacks, the kind used to hold coffee beans.

The use of jute sacks extends to several Roman shades by the stairs as well as to made-to-order lamps wrapped in the earth-tone fabric. In place of curtain rings, Tan chose strings of *abaca* to hold the curtains together.

The same rough material is paired with *katsa*, which guests in two elevated lounges can readily pull to give them a semblance of privacy, never mind the roving eyes of other guests seated on the second floor.

### Like a courtyard

The place is designed like a courtyard, so you get a view of the lounge areas below from the second level. A pair of catwalks made of checkered metal plates connect the left and right wings. Decorative wooden rafters taken from the Kadiwa outlet that used to occupy the place serve no structural purpose except to hang the lights from.

The use of various shades is also reflected in several padded chairs, sofas and throw pillows found in each lounge. Again, Tan succeeds in perking up each area through the use of different but complimentary colors. Sturdy wicker chairs framed in metal and wooden tables with wrought-iron legs make up the bar and several common areas. Slow-moving ceiling fans double as cooling devices and overhead accents.

Again, the stairs leading to the second floor, portions of which were done either in concrete or metal plates, are another classic example of a marriage between two totally different materials. Concrete steps are edged with stones.

"It would have been easier to come up with purely metal or purely concrete steps," says Tan. "But it would have been too boring."

If the elevated lounge near the entrance features multilevel display shelves, the one across it comes with a wall with dozens of niches reserved for lighted candles. Soot has begun to mar the wall covered in water-based paint. Tan doesn't mind as it adds character to the place by making it look "lived in."

Africa continues to rear its rustic head, if literally, in the form of a stuffed head of a horned impala. Several framed prints and a faux clock again fashioned from pieces of *traviesa* complete the entire picture on the wall. Perhaps the only thing missing is an animal rug.

"The entire setup is designed like a stage with candle niches as backdrop," he says.

With such richly textured interiors, is there danger for the food to be an afterthought? Thankfully, it's another good reason to come to Moomba.

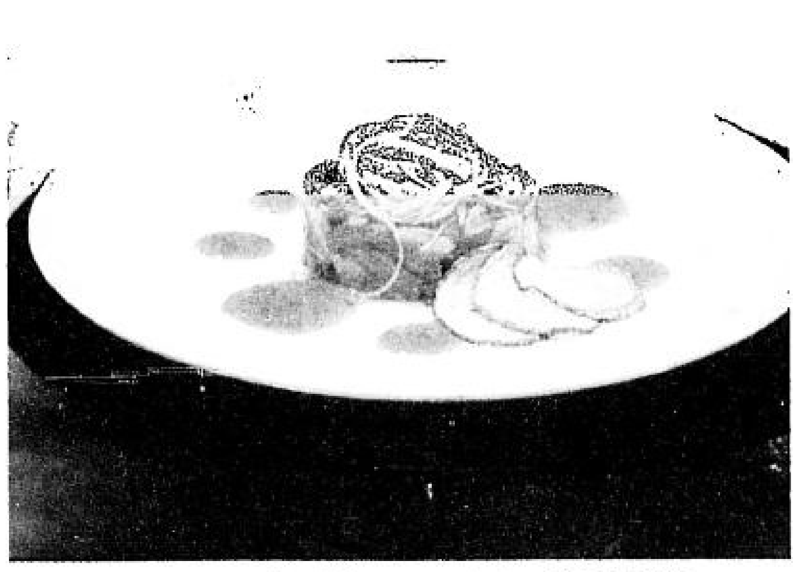
Young executive chef Jose Tanseco III, who sharpened his chops working in the kitchens of Sydney and Marseilles, whips up the fusion cuisine, which includes various salads, pizza and pasta dishes. Why fusion? "It allows me to come with dishes that look and taste good," he reasons.

The rave at Moomba are his ostrich slices cooked à la pobre, complete with steamed potatoes and sprinkled with generous amounts of roasted garlic. A bigger slab of ostrich served with a crust of herb caper and mint sauce has become a bestseller as well. The chili Mediterranean salad consist of a light medley of bell peppers, eggplant and salsa mixed with the restaurant's special chili sauce.

Unless the wingless bird has also gone cuckoo, gourmands need not fear getting the dreaded mad-cow disease. Unlike beef, ostrich meat imported from Down Under is said to be low in cholesterol. Tanseco, by the way, has three other ways of preparing it: in brandy, in herbs and peppercorn sauce or, if you wish, Satay sauce with zucchini, carrots and eggplant.

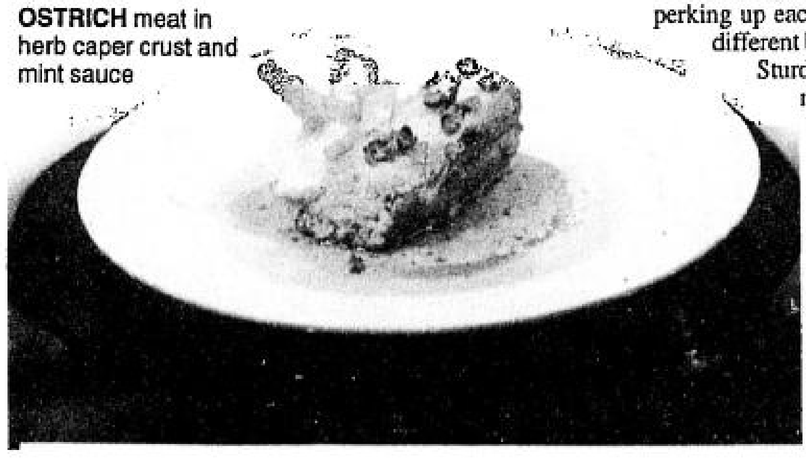
At Moomba, there are as many ways to cook ostrich as there are uses for jute sack.

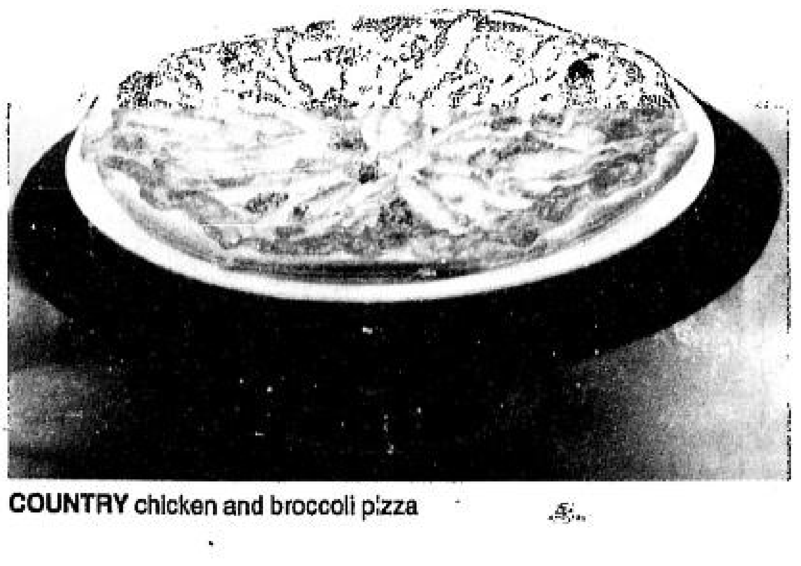
*E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer. com.ph*



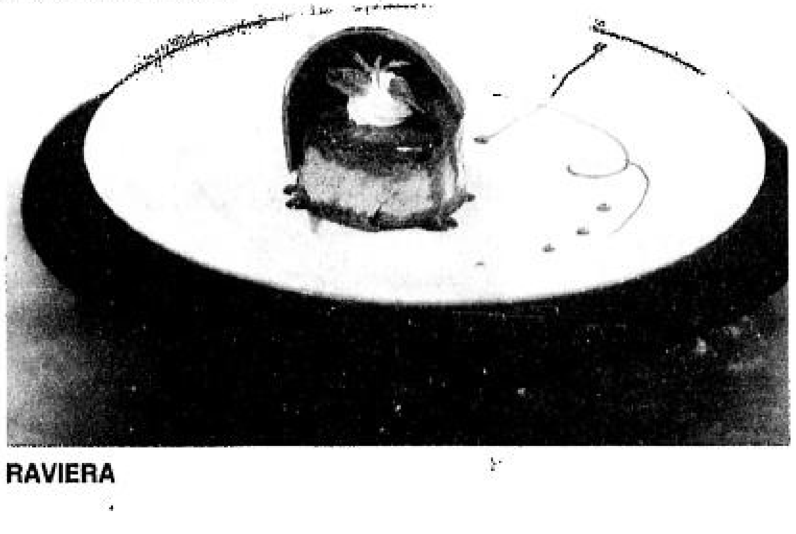
**SWEET** chili Mediterranean salad

**OSTRICH** meat in herb caper crust and mint sauce

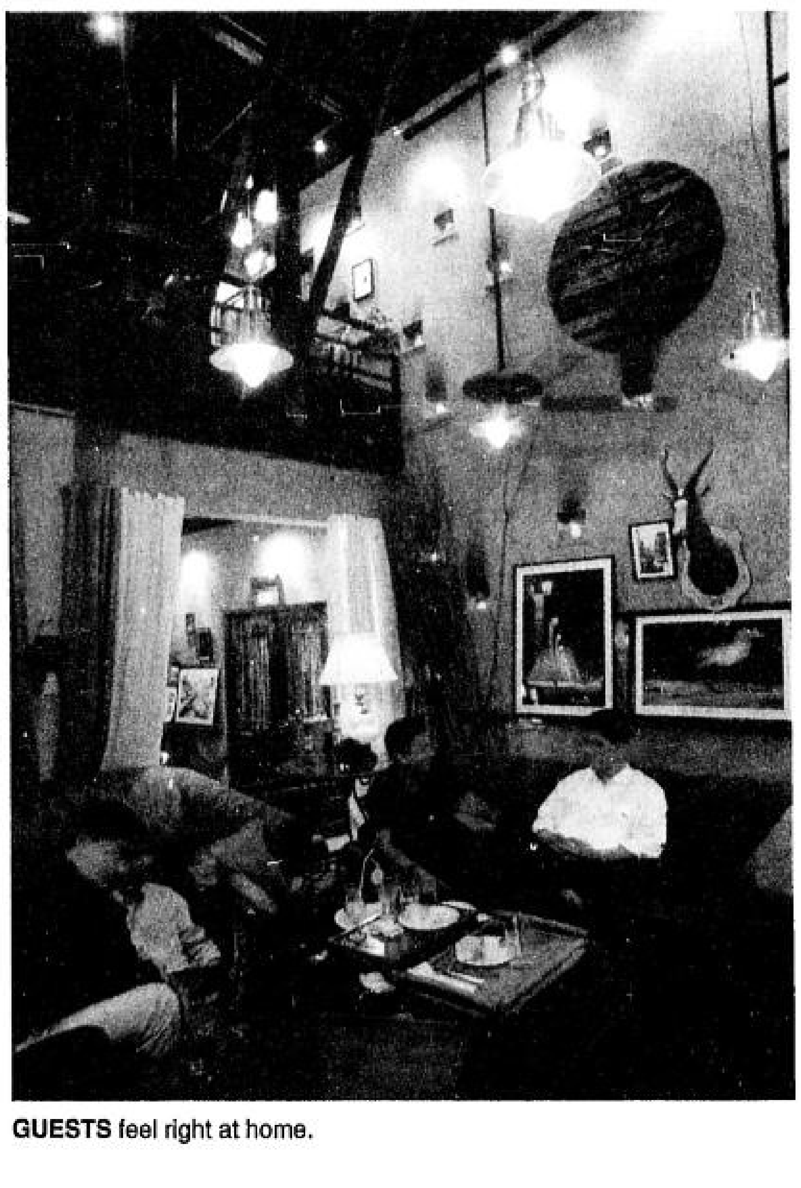




**COUNTRY** chicken and broccoli pizza



**RAVIERA**



**GUESTS** feel right at home.

# Mighty half of Edsa II celebrated

PURSUANT to Proclamation Nos. 224 and 227 and Republic Act 6949, March was declared as "Women's Month" to highlight the historical contributions Filipino women have made to the nation's growth.

The National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) was designated to act as the Secretariat to coordinate nationwide observance of Women's Month.

For this year's celebration, Commissioner Myrna Yao, who represents the National Council of Women of the Philippines (NCWP) in the NCRFW Board of Commissioners, was appointed to chair the celebration.

NCRFW chair Dr. Amelou Reyes said this year's theme "Kababaihan: Kabalikat sa Kapayapaan at Kaunlaran" was chosen since it highlights women's participation in the Edsa People Power 2.

She said the celebration honors the achievements of women not only in managing the home but also in shaping a better society.

Yao added the month-long celebration will also serve as a venue for unifying the efforts of the government with that of nongovernment organizations in raising the Filipino people's awareness on women's issues and concerns.

There shall be different activities each day focusing on women in entrepreneurship, disability, different nationalities, education, tourism, uniform, arts and music, cooperatives, sports, environment and natural resources, spiritual affairs, health, fitness and sports, business, trade and industry, peace, technology, labor, rights, and authentic womanhood in the family, *araw ng maybahay*, girl-child week, and a forum on women political parties.

The National Women's Day celebration today starts with an Alay Lakad from the Edsa Shrine to the Philippine Sports Complex Stadium.

Highlighting the celebration is the observance of the National Women's Day with a whole day program at the PSC Stadium.

Participating organizations are urged to bring their streamers depicting their commitment to women's empowerment.

Part of the program is the sewing together of the streamers with the aim to make the world's longest mural.

Many women NGOs are participating in the celebration. NCRFW and NCWP have been kept busy coordinating their activities with that of their government counterparts.

Yao is enjoining all women groups—and even men groups who have the interest of women at heart—to support the celebration.

Women's Month was launched March 2 at the Rembrandt Hotel with a breakfast forum titled "Ugnayan sa Rembrandt."

## PROGRAM

| | |
|---|---|
| 6:00-8:00 a.m. | **Alay Lakad from Edsa Shrine to Ultra** |
| 8:00-9:00 a.m. | **Holy Mass**<br>Father Joey Faller, Officiating Priest |
| 9:30-10:30 a.m. | **Women Leaders' Breakfast with the President**<br>(Venue: Bulwagan, DECS, Pasig City) |
| 11:00-12:00 nn | **National Anthem**<br>NSO Chorale<br>**Ecumenical Prayer**<br>Representatives from the Catholic, Muslim and Protestant religious sectors<br>**Ulat sa Kababaihan ng Mababang Kapulungan**<br>Rep. Patricia Sarenas<br>**Pledge of Support**<br>To be led by Myrna T. Yao, NCRFW Commissioner<br>**Ritual Signing of the "Tapis ng Kababaihan"**<br>Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo<br>**Introduction of Keynote Speaker**<br>Dr. Amelou Benitez-Reyes<br>NCRFW Chairperson<br>**Keynote Address**<br>President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo |
| 1:00-2:00 p.m. | **Chorale Exhibition**<br>Participating Choral Groups from different government departments |
| 2:00-2:15 p.m. | **Mass Dancing**<br>To be led by Dr. Lydia Buendia |
| 2:15-3:00 p.m. | **Special Awards** |

# Partners in peace and development

THE National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) spearheads the yearly celebration of Women's Month and National Women's Day. Giving importance to the roles women played in the recent change of government, the theme this year is "Kababaihan: Kabalikat sa Kapayapaan at Kaunlaran." It is high time to give regard to the role of women in attaining peace and development.

"When government and society miss women's contributions to nation-building and peacekeeping, women's potentials are not being fully harnessed," says NCRFW chair Dr. Amelou Benitez-Reyes in a recent press conference held for Women's Month.

It has been known the Filipino women are in a better standing than their Southeast Asian counterparts, yet they continually face economic and political marginalization. Oftentimes the value of their work is less than that of the men, considering that the amount of time and effort contributed is the same for both. In government and in the private sector, women are found in the technical positions, but few reach management positions.

The month-long celebration activities shall bring awareness that women are not just incidental beneficiaries of peace but are equal partners for the preservation and attainment of peace and development. Beyond being instruments of peace and development, "Kababaihan: Kabalikat sa Kapayapaan at Kaunlaran" tells us that women could also take the lead, just as exemplified by our second woman president, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

**OPENING OF EXHIBITS**

The National Historical Institute and the Women of Malolos Foundation Inc. recently opened to the public the museum memorializing the courage of the 21 Women of Malolos at the Casa Real in Malolos, Bulacan. 112 years ago, these women petitioned Governor General Valeriano Weyler to put up a night school where they could learn Spanish, a proposal earlier turned down by the parish priest of Malolos. A collection from that era is now permanently displayed at the museum. Photo shows (from left) Dr. Estefania Aldaba-Lim, head of the WMFI; Dr. Pablo S. Trillana III, NHI chair and executive director; former Senator Helena Z. Benitez, guest of honor; Lualhati Aldaba-Cojuangco, Philippine Women's University Alumni Association president.

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all over the world.
This International Women's Day,
call your most special one.

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BRIDGEWAY DINING. View from the second floor, including one of the catwalks and portion of the dining area below

The name is aborigine in origin, the interiors are rough ethnic and the cuisine, fusion

**NO** two fabrics are alike as far as this lounge chair goes.

# Out of Africa

By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Bobot Meru

**THE FOOD scene continues to sizzle in Quezon City with the recent opening of a bar cum restaurant with Moroccan-inspired contemporary interiors and a fusion cuisine, including five ways to savor exotic ostrich meat.**

Moomba, on Mother Ignacia and A. Roces Avenues (tel. 373-2487), has been packing in a diverse mix of yuppies, GenXers and businessman-types since it formally opened several weeks ago. If such a place pulls in a sizable evening crowd on a weekday, we wonder how it manages on weekends.

The restaurant's ambiance, without a doubt, has plenty to do with appeal. Perhaps nowhere in Metro Manila have old *traviesas* or railroad ties, jute sacks, exposed rafters, dried *patalsik* twigs and votive candles glowing in their respective niches been used to maximum effect than in Moomba.

Moomba is an Australian aborigine word for "let's have fun." The interiors may be African-inspired, but the entire scene evokes Victorian chic. You half-expect a younger Merryl Streep from "Out of Africa" to stage an appearance any minute.

The best part is that architect Edward Tan and his team didn't have to spend the owners' entire fortune to achieve such a look. The UST-educated Tan refused to reveal their total budget; the word "cheap" kept cropping up almost every time he pointed to a style element. We soon understood why.

## In the details

No fancy ceramic tiles or wood parquet, for example, make up any part of the floor. Instead, Tan opted for plain cemented surface lined with encrusted stones for added drama in high-traffic areas. The same device appears in the two elevated lounges, only this time smaller stones follow more complicated patterns.

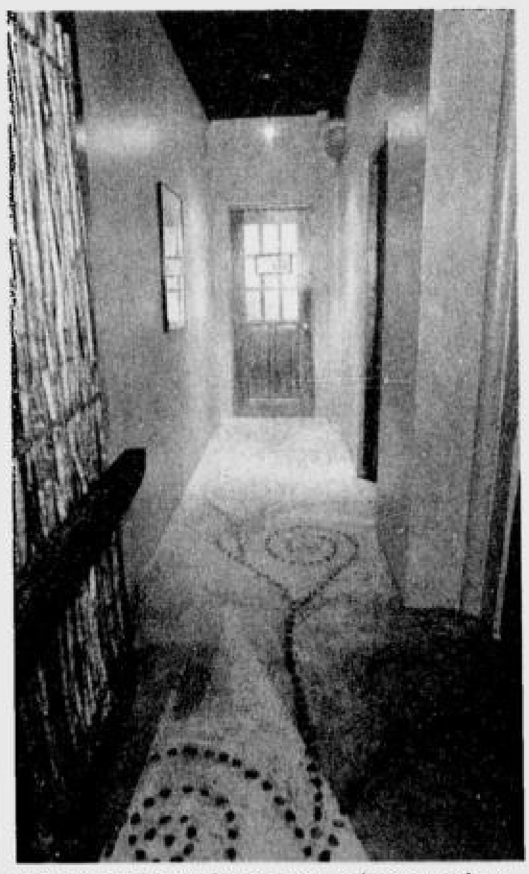
The bar counter and sink areas are also made of cement slabs. Cold, gray surfaces contrast with carrot orange walls that dominate the entire restaurant. Sinks found in the restrooms were made of aluminum basins readily found in a wet market. This time, Tan chose muted green for the walls.

"We could have easily created a replica of an existing bar or grill, but we didn't," Tan says. "The owners want to bring guests to a place they haven't been before, a place not found anywhere else in Manila."

And that becomes evident the moment you enter Moomba's double doors framed with distressed wood and lined with varnished *patalsik* twigs. Smaller varieties of the dried plant are found everywhere—in vases, shelves and ledges. No wonder, since a bundle of the lowly but versatile twig sourced from Bicol costs a mere P35.

A worn plank of *traviesa* doubles as the door handle. Clear sheets of story glass make up part of the high-ceilinged vestibule, while moss green

OUT/ p.C6



**DOOR** leading to the restrooms is spruced up with *patalsik* twigs tied together by rattan and set off by a slab of *traviesa*. The cement floor is encrusted with curlicues of stones.

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Abbott GROW "Switch & Swap" promo is open to parents/guardians of children 1 year and older. Just bring the following to the "Switch & Swap" booth:
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2. One (1) empty can (any size) of any milk product (except Grow, Gain, and Gainplus) currently used by the child.
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1. FREE 36 gm. Sample packs (2 each) of Abbott GROW (Vanilla & Chocolate flavor)
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- One entry per family
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Per DOH - BFAD Permit NO. 0039 series of 2001

# CEBU PACIFIC

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## CEBU PACIFIC CELEBRATES FIVE YEARS OF FUN AND GREAT SERVICE!

CEBU PACIFIC

Cebu Pacific's President and CEO, Lance Gokongwei, circa 2001

CEBU PACIFIC AIR
Inaugural Flight
Bacolod City
7 DECEMBER 1996

Cebu Pacific's visionary founder, John Gokongwei, Jr., during the inaugural flight to Bacolod, circa 1996

***Cebu Pacific Air is flying high, and with several excellent reasons to.***

*When this young airline launched its maiden flight back in March 8, 1996 – a little more than a year after the airline industry was liberalized by the government – it also launched a whole new, fun and affordable, experience in air travel. Inspite of the modesty of its start-up operations, CEB's biggest shareholder, JG Summit Holdings Inc., was more than determined to bring flying closer to more Filipinos...which, by no means, was an easy feat.*

Under the helm of its visionary founder John L. Gokongwei, and its president, Lance Y. Gokongwei, Cebu Pacific gathered a handful of professionals - all of whom possess airline knowledge and experience culled from and tested in both the domestic and international arenas. From the beginning, CEB was clearly focused on its objective: to give Filipinos a worthy choice in their mode of travel, and this without sacrificing safety and quality of service. **On-time performance, schedule reliability, personalized service and a safe, comfortable flight** are the things the air-travelling public has come to expect from Cebu Pacific. In this airline however, surpassing expectations is a given.

Five
YEARS
of
Fun & Great Service

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## MALACAÑAN PALACE

I wish to express my heartfelt felicitations to Cebu Pacific Air, as it celebrates its fifth year of flying.

For five eventful years, Cebu Pacific Air has made invaluable contributions to the economic development of the country, particularly through the provision of quality service to both local and foreign travelers. Amidst the advancements in technology and the rapid movements of innovation, there is a great need for an affordable mode of air transportation which can move with the times, and can meet the various needs of passengers, while maintaining high standards of safety and quality of service. I am happy to note that Cebu Pacific is one such airline.

I urge you to fly in the new millennium with progress of the country in mind. I am confident that your efficiency, high-quality service and timely innovation will result in your airline's success.

Mabuhay ang Cebu Pacific !

GMArroyo
**GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO**

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Republic of the Philippines
## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

I am extending my warmest greetings and congratulations to the officials and staff of Cebu Pacific as it celebrates its fifth anniversary on March 8,2001. This is indeed an important milestone in Cebu Pacific's impressive record of responsible service to the Filipino nation.

Over the years, Cebu Pacific has grown vigorously to become one of the country's promising airlines. Your company's garnering of company-wide AQS 9000/121 and ISO 9002 certifications are strong testimonies to your continuing resolve to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and cargo across our country.

The new millennium brings with it new and more complex challenges in the civil aviation industry but I am confident that your company will be able to sustain its growth amid rapid changes and growing sophistication in aviation technology. Your efficiency and trend-setting services and innovations bear this out.

I trust, therefore, that these celebrations will continue to challenge Cebu Pacific to greater zeal and achievement for the service of the nation

Again, congratulations and happy anniversary to all!

**PANTALEON ALVAREZ**
Secretary Department of Transportation and Communication

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## DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

The celebration of Cebu Pacific Air's fifth year is a felicitous occasion for Philippine tourism The Department of Tourism, thus, extends its congratulations on this milestone in Philippine aviation.

The airline's valuable service to local and foreign travelers goes a long way in the chain of benefits and opportunities accorded by a thriving tourism industry to the Filipino people. Five years in operation spells five good years in the maintenance of high standards of safety and quality of service.

Cebu Pacific Air's presence in our skies has created a significant impact on the provision of safe and affordable travel especially for our people. I urge the airlines to continue with its efforts to uplift the tourism sector through the expansion of operations and the extension of pleasant flying experience.

With Cebu Pacific, we hope to see our country soar in tourism, bringing more jobs, career opportunities and brighter future for the Filipinos.

**RICHARD J. GORDON**
Secretary of Tourism

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communication
## CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD

May I extend to Cebu Pacific Air my warmest congratulation on its Fifth Anniversary. I have been a witness how this airline started modestly, slowly growing progressively and becoming one of the major players in the airline industry today.

What it is today, as one of the successful air carriers in the country, is due to sheer hard work and perseverance. Cebu Pacific Air truly deserves this warm congratulation.

**ATTY. MANUEL C. SAN JOSE**
Officer-In-Charge
Civil Aeronautics Board

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Republic of the Philippines
## MANILA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Metro Manila

I take pride in congratulating the Management and Staff of Cebu Pacific Air on the occasion of your 5th Founding Anniversary.

I must say that you have accomplished so much and has made a significant difference in the local aviation industry. The Manila International Airport Authority has been a witness to your organization's remarkable conversion from a small airline to a major player in the airline industry.

Cebu Pacific is a shining example of the Filipino's spirit to aim high inspite of daunting challenges. Your remarkable contribution in the growth of domestic tourism and inter-island trade will help the government achieve its goal to improve the lives of the marginalized sector of our society.

Surely the year 2001 will bring forth more challenges in the airline operation and I am hopeful that your company will be able to sustain development amidst all these growing sophistication.

Once again, congratulations and more power!

**EDGARDO C. MANDA**
General Manager
Manila International Airport Authority

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Republic of the Philippines
CITY OF CEBU
## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Cheers to the management and staff of Cebu Pacific Air on their 5th Year Anniversary celebration on march 8, 2001. Since its maiden flight 5 years ago to Cebu City, CEBU PACIFIC AIR has established itself as a force to reckon with and a fleet to depend on in the local travel industry. It has indeed become the Cebuanos's favorite airline!

It did not take long for us Cebuanos to discover the fun and pleasure in flying with Cebu Pacific Air.

And true to its name, CEBU PACIFIC AIR has gained and earned the respect and patronage of the Cebuanos who finally have an airline to call their own.

On the occasion of your 5th year anniversary, may I convey my deep appreciation and sincerest congratulations to all the men and women behind Cebu Pacific Air who have contributed not only to the success of your airline company but most of all to the impetus you have provided in the promotion of Cebu City's tourism program

May you continue to serve the Cebuanos and the Filipino flying public throughout the coming years

**ALVIN B. GARCIA**
City Mayor

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Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE CONGRESSMAN
### 1st Congressional District
### Davao City

It is my pleasure to extend my warmest felicitations to the management and entire personnel and staff of the Cebu Pacific Air as they celebrate the carrier's 5th founding Anniversary.

In the span of five years the riding public would bear witness to the efforts of Cebu Pacific Air to maintain and improve its affordable services despite the economic slump that hit the country.

As it celebrates its anniversary today, I am hopeful that Cebu Pacific Airlines recommits itself to it noble mission not only in providing a reliable and pro-poor air carrier service but as a steady partner for progress and stability in our country.

Long Live Cebu Pacific Air!

**RODRIGO R. DUTERTE**
Congressman
1st District Davao City

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Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE CONGRESSMAN
### 2nd Congressional District
### Davao City

Congratulation to Cebu Pacific on the occasion of its 5th Anniversary on March 8, 2001.

In behalf of Dabawenyos, especially those residing in the Second District, allow me to take this opportunity to thank you for locating a very valuable service company in our city.

Considering the vast tremendous business potentials of our place, we certainly look forward to countless other anniversaries of Cebu Pacific. May you find Dabawenyos pleasant enough as hosts for you to want to continue situating your business here.

Again Congratulations!

**MANUEL M. GARCIA**
Congressman
2nd District Davao City

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Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE CONGRESSMAN
### 3rd Congressional District
### Davao City

Let me express my heartfelt congratulations to the entire Cebu Pacific Family in the Sky on the occasion of 5th Anniversary celebration on March 8. 2001.

It is with great pride for the people of Davao City to be one of the destinations of a Great Value Airline and having served for 5 years of quality service to our travellers May you continue to provide the excellent service and enhancing customer satisfaction in the next decade of flying high.

Again, congratulations and more power to you.

**RUY ELIAS C. LOPEZ**
Congressman
3rd District Davao City

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Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
### City of Davao

My warmest greetings to the Cebu Pacific on its 5th Anniversary!

By serving strategic points in Mindanao, your airline company has brought people and goods to their destination, thus promoting domestic tourism and trade in southern Philippines. More so, your operations have helped elevate our airline business into competitive levels, gliding at par with the rest of our Asian neighbors. I wish and hope that you will continue to fly and move on to transform Mindanao as the center of economic activity in the country.

Fly high, Cebu Pacific!

**BENJAMIN C. DE GUZMAN**
City Mayor

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Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
### Plaza Libertad, Iloilo City

It is with warmth and pleasure that I greet the management and staff of Cebu Pacific Air on the occasion of your Fifth Anniversary!

The advent of Cebu Pacific Air in Iloilo City in particular and the country in general actually provided more than a healthy competition in an industry otherwise nearly monopolized by the nation's largest carrier. Ilonggos have found an ally and a dependable partner in Cebu Pacific, quick to respond to their needs for a safe and economical air transport.

With continued guidance and protection from the Lord Almighty, I am completely confident that Cebu Pacific Air will have many, many more years of flying the nation's skies and in transporting Filipinos safely to their respective destinations. This humble representation and my family sincerely wishes Cebu Pacific Air and its employees all the best

Godspeed and best wishes!

**MANSUETO A. MALABOR**
City Mayor II

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Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
### Bacolod City

We congratulate and join Cebu Pacific Air in marking its 5th year in the air travel business.

Your decision 5 years ago to open a route in Bacolod City was welcomed with much enthusiasm by Bacoleños, most especially the businessmen, professionals and, by and large, the commuting public.

Today aside from ending a monopoly, your presence here has pushed Bacolod as a major travel destination in the Visayas. You have given our economy the boost needed at these most trying financial times.

May you and our City of Bacolod continue to work together harmoniously, for and in the best interest we both serve.

My personal warm and sincere congratulations!

**OSCAR R. VERDEFLOR**
Municipal Mayor

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Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
### City of Kalibo

It is my distinct pleasure to extend my warmest greetings to the Cebu Pacific Air on its 5th Year Anniversary of Airline Services on March 8, 2001. This occasion also marks years of fruitful and efficient service of Cebu Pacific Air to Kalibonhons and the Aklanons at large Record-breaking number of tourist arrivals and the consequent, unprecedented economic growth characterized the past years of which Cebu Pacific was a dynamic factor.

Today. the Ati-Atihan Town of Kalibo braces for the tougher challenges of the 3rd Millennium. But along with those challenges that lie ahead, investors are also bound for a rich harvest of golden opportunities for further achievements and growth as the economic climate continues to brighten up.

I enjoin the Management and Staff of Cebu Pacific Air in your commitment to serve with utmost dedication and efficiency our mutual constituency - the people of Aklan, particularly the people of the Capital Town of Kalibo.

Godspeed and More Power!

**DIEGO M. LUCES**
Municipal Mayor

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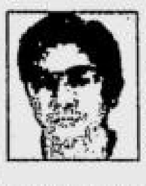
Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
### Province Of Negros Occidental



Warmest greetings to the Management and Staff of Cebu Pacific Air on the occasion of your 5th Anniversary.

Allow me, first of all, to extend my sincere and heartfelt commendations to each of you for continuing to provide quality service to the Negrosanons and the entire nation In these times of rapid economic growth and technological advancement, your contribution, by way of effective and efficient transport services and in linking the entire nation, is indeed valuable and worthy of high praises.

It is my fervent hope, then, that you would continue to strengthen your commitment to provide adequate and efficient service to the people. May you continue to upgrade the level of quality of service you extend to our people for the promotion of a reliable and comfortable means of transport from one destination to another.

On behalf of the Provincial Government of Negros Occidental, I wish you more power and success in the years to come.

**RAFAEL L. COSCOLLUELA**
Governor

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Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
### City of Iloilo

My warmest congratulations to the Cebu Pacific Air on its Fifth Anniversary celebration.

It is indeed encouraging to note that civil aviation has become quite a vibrant and dynamic industry in the Philippines. The entry of Cebu Pacific Air and a lot of other airlines plying the various domestic travel routes has served well to develop the air transportation sector not only in terms of more competitive fares and increased flight frequency but also in terms of better services. For the Ilonggos, in particular, Cebu Pacific has become a reliable companion in his travels to other parts of the country.

Once again, congratulations and my very best wishes for a successful affair.

**ARTHUR D. DEFENSOR**
Governor

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Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
### City of Zamboanga

Greetings to Cebu Pacific Air on its fifth Anniversary of service to the Filipino public. As a provider of economical and dependable domestic air transportation, the company is one of our country's key engines for development. Its growth is an auspicious marker of progress.

Zamboanga City, especially its business community and travel sector, has benefited from the airline's operation. Cebu Pacific's presence on the local scene in friendly competition with the other domestic airlines assures travelers and shippers of enough seat and cargo space for their needs. Complemented with inexpensive fares, its availability has bolstered the jetplane as the travel mode of choice for people who require a fast means of transportation.

Now boasting to be the Philippines' second largest carrier, with more than five million passengers ferried since 1996, Cebu Pacific is certain to achieve even more growth. It is my hope that Zamboanga City's economy will grow along with the airline.

Congratulations to the owners, flight crews and ground staff of Cebu Pacific and its local representative, Summit World Zamboanga, Inc. My wishes for a safe and successful future.

Maria Clara L. Lobregat
**MARIA CLARA L. LOBREGAT**
City Mayor

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Republic of the Philippines
## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
### City of Roxas

The Roxas City Government joins the management and staff of Cebu Pacific in the celebration of its 5th year of service to the Filipino people.

As the number one producer of seafood in our country, the inclusion of Roxas City as one of the service areas of Cebu Pacific has greatly helped in the improvement of the economy not only of our city but the rest of the municipalities of Capiz as well. Not only that, it has also given our people the opportunity to travel by air at a cost that is affordable to everyone.

I wish the management and staff of Cebu Pacific headed by Lance Gokongwei the best and mabuhay!

**ANTONIO A. DEL ROSARIO**
City Mayor

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Republic of the Philippines
## TACLOBAN CITY

To the officials and staff of Cebu Pacific, Tacloban branch - on the occasion of your 5th anniversary - my warmest greetings!

As Chief Executive of the City, I am indeed grateful that Cebu Pacific has opened many flights to and from Tacloban. Your entry to our Region has triggered off and accelerated the development of Eastern Visayas.

Please accept my sincerest best wishes for many more productive years ahead.

Congratulations!

**ALFREDO T. ROMUALDEZ**
City Mayor

# Cebu Pacific Celebrates...

The group's commitment to Cebu Pacific's vision statement - *"We are the Filipino's airline of choice. We are a trusted member of each Filipino family and a vital partner in the nation's progress"* - served as the driving force in leading the airline to become *the preferred airline.*

Efforts were not made in vain. In just a little more than 18 months later, CEB welcomed its one millionth passenger, after which it averaged one million revenue passengers per annum in the next two years. By September 2000, seven months before its fifth birthday, Cebu Pacific honored its five millionth revenue passenger, and by year end, has carried more than 5.5 million passengers. Its present market share is 30% on the routes that it serves.

CEBU PACIFIC
CONGRATULATES!
OUR
5 MILLIONTH PASSENGER
SEPTEMBER 2000

**Cebu Pacific honors its 5 millionth passenger.**

CEB's original fleet of 4 DC-9 McDonnell Douglas aircraft has tripled to 12. Its humble initial offering of three destinations became 11: Manila, Cebu, Davao, Iloilo, Bacolod, Tacloban, Cagayan de Oro, Zamboanga, Roxas City, Dumaguete and Kalibo. Cebu Pacific also developed its inter-VISMIN service, as it offers direct flights from Cebu to Davao, Bacolod, Iloilo, Kalibo, Zamboanga and vice versa.

Two employment pre-requisites: warmth and the love for service. Cebu Pacific's unwavering focus on customer satisfaction is one of the reasons why its tag line **"the on-time, great value airline,"** remains steadfast. It is also the reason why frequent flyers consider CEB as **"your family in the sky."**

The airline's innovations have become legendary among Filipino travellers. To this day, only CEB offers fun in the skies with its "FunFlights." These are games being conducted on board the flights - just clean, simple enjoyment to drive away the ennui usually present during travel. "Bring Me" asks for particular items to be brought to the flight attendant-cum-gamemaster; "Name That Tune," is an apparent favorite, as with "Sing Me A Love Song," and the very popular "Bingo." It also has "Shooters in the Sky," a mini-basketball type of game where nobody loses. Prizes are gift items distinct to Cebu Pacific.

"Fun" is a key word in Cebu Pacific. That's why it has the Easter Bunny hop around the pre-departure area during Easter. That's why it has costume contests during Halloween. That's why it featured musicians and a caricaturist one Valentine's Day. That's why its employees have to have a sense of humor, and a flair for entertainment.

"Great Values" is a key phrase in Cebu Pacific, and this is the incentive for constant product innovations. The *Commuter Pass* – an ideal product for frequent flyers – is a booklet of 11 tickets for the price of 10. The *Great Value Ticket* – entitled flyers to numerous discounts. *Hotels Plus* offers the best room rates in Cebu Pacific's partner hotels. And *Summit Club* gives hefty rewards to the airline's frequent flyers.

There are more unique ideas, more ways to have fun, more great values in the offing. The quest to discover better ways to serve its customers is endless, as resting on one's laurels has never been part of this airline's culture.

Because for Cebu Pacific, happiness is not in proving cynics wrong, but in proving their customers right in keeping their faith in the airline.

And these customers are the very reason for Cebu Pacific's existence.

**A festive welcome for Cebu Pacific during its maiden flight to Dumaguete.**

CEBU PACIFIC WELCOMES THE MILLENNIUM 2000

**Cebu Pacifics exclusive merchandise that passengers can win in Fun Flight games.**

# The First in the World

QUALITY ASSURED FIRM
ISO 9002
SGS
THE INSTITUTE OF AVIATION QUALITY AND SAFETY
AQS 9000-121
AQS 9000-121 CERTIFIED

**The Cebu Pacific family proudly receives their AQS 9000/121 and ISO 9002 certifications.**

Safety and quality are – and have always been – Cebu Pacific's primary concerns.

Aside from its rigid maintenance programs and its meticulous training programs for pilots, cabin crew and maintenance personnel, Cebu Pacific also bagged a company-wide certification for Aviation Quality and Safety (AQS 9000 / 121) and International Organization for Standardization (ISO 9002). In addition, it is about to embark on the transition from ISO 9002 - 1994 standards to ISO 9002 - 2000 standards.

This, on top of passing the Air Transportation Office's (ATO) stringent airworthiness audit with flying colors in September 1998, and every year thereafter.

The AQS 9000 / 121 certification mandates that Cebu Pacific adhere to aviation regulations applicable to the operations of the airline. The certification is only given after an airline puts into place systems that make compliance second nature.

The ISO 9002 certification guarantees that internal processes are all geared towards assuring a consistently high quality of service.

Both certifications are not obligatory of any airline, but were done by Cebu Pacific on top of the required RP-ATO Administrative Order 121, a safety and standard requirement all Philippine registered airlines have to hurdle before they are allowed to operate. Cebu Pacific is steadfast in its commitment to meeting the standards of safety and quality AQS 9000 / 121 and ISO 9002 dictate. Because of this, the airline continuously and consistently conducts internal audits to ensure company-wide compliance to these standards.

Other airlines have also been AQS 9000 / 121 or ISO 9002 certified, but only for certain divisions like maintenance or catering services. Before 1999 came to a close, Cebu Pacific Air added another feather to its ever-growing cap. It became the first airline in the world to have its entire organization AQS 9000 / 121 and ISO 9002 certified.

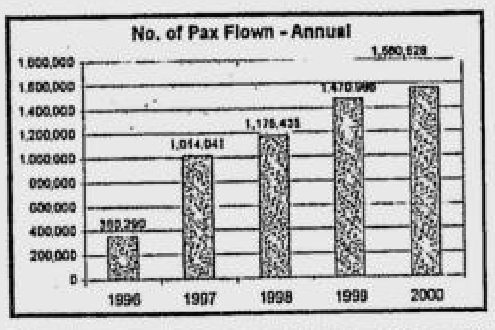
# CEBs Five Year Performance

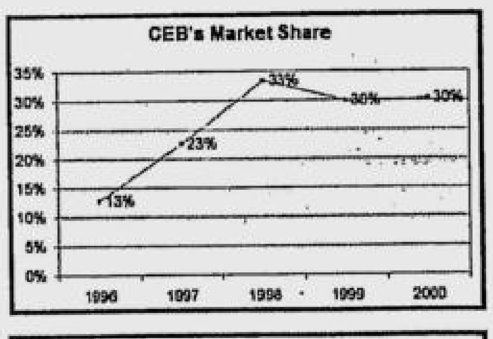
Enjoying 30% of the market share on the routes that it serves, Cebu Pacific is now hailed as the country's number two domestic carrier.

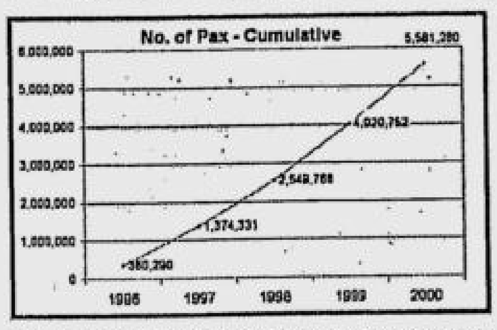
In its first year of operations, CEB flew more than 360,000 passengers and this figure increased to more than a million and a half in year 2000. Initially averaging one million revenue passengers per year, the airline reached the four millionth mark three months shy of its fourth anniversary, and its five millionth mark, seven months before the airline turned five years old. CEB closed year 2000 with more than 5.5 million revenue passengers.

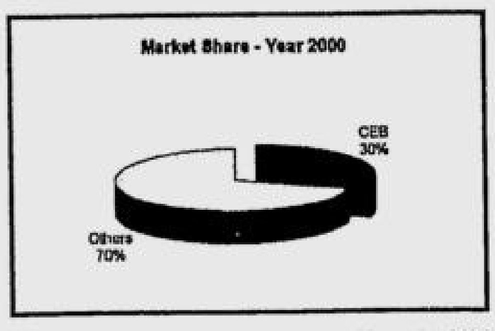
On-time flying was – and still is - Cebu Pacific's battlecry. In year 2000 alone, the airline gave its customers a world class reliability record of flying 96% of its flights within fifteen minutes of schedule and 87% departing on the dot – to the minute.

Schedule reliability is another high-rating aspect in Cebu Pacific's performance. Last year, the airline maintained an outstanding completion factor of 99.4%, making its passengers come to know that in this airline, flight delays and cancellations are more of the rare exception rather than the rule.

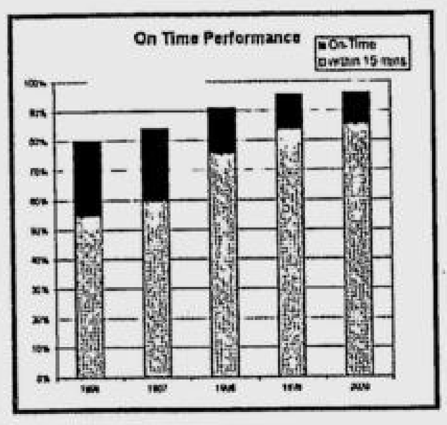








Cebu Pacific has firmed up its position as the second largest carrier in the routes that it serves. In its introductory year, the airline captured 13% of the market. Its market share has since been increasing to the present 30%. (Cebu Pacific experienced its highest market share in 1998 with the temporary closure of one of the other carriers.)



Cebu Pacific's on-time performance has always been a source of pride for the airline.
Since start-up, the percentage of flights that departed within 15 minutes of published time has constantly been on the rise:
In 1996, 80%
In 1997, 84%
In 1998, 91%
In 1999, 96%
In 2000, 96%

# A Display of CEB Spirit

***Story 1: A simple case of big-time honesty...***

*In his rush, a passenger seemingly lost a bag full of his valuables: more than P150,000 in cash, plus other immediately negotiable checks, bank notes and instruments worth more than half a million pesos. It was just his luck that he left everything on a Cebu Pacific flight. The flight attendant found it while checking the seats, and with nary a second thought, promptly turned the bag over to the station manager, who in turn, traced the owner's identification. A short while later, owner and bag – with all its contents intact - were reunited.*

*The temptation is not to be scoffed at and it must take solid fortitude and a true heart for service - to dismiss the invitation to just stash the cash.*

***Story 2: No job is too big or too small...*** *December is always a busy time at the airport, as travelers are eager to hop on the soonest available flight to spend the Holidays with loved ones.*

*A visiting Cebu Pacific office supervisor was finished with his business at the airport for the day and was about to go home. He took in the sight of airport personnel struggling to keep up with the never-ending stream of passengers in a hurry to check in, and he forgot about going home. Till the last flight took off that day, the supervisor stayed at the airport, tagging and loading baggage as well as assisting passengers.*

***Story 3: They go out of their way when needed...***

*On his way home after an evening flight, a Cebu Pacific pilot chanced upon an old lady waiting for her ride. Recognizing her as one of the passengers onboard his flight, he stopped to check on her. It turned out that the lady's daughter was still held up in a meeting, and the lady had no choice but to wait. Without hesitation, the pilot offered to drive her home, and the lady readily accepted.*

Maintenance on the job.

The airport team, greeting passengers, always with warm smiles.

Such occurrences are usual in Cebu Pacific. Going above and beyond the call of duty is something that all employees have taken to heart, a culture lived out daily in the nation's number 2 carrier. The company's desire is not only to serve its customers, but to delight them as well. And receiving positive feedback from passengers – knowing that Cebu Pacific was able to give them a uniquely pleasant flying, and even on ground, experience makes all the efforts worthwhile.

This is because the *Cebu Pacific Spirit* – defined as a compelling passion to treat all customers and each other with a true heart and soul for service is embodied in each and every member of the CEB family.

Part of the allure of air travel - Cebu Pacific's meticulously-trained, and charming pilots.

# The CEB Family

Cebu Pacific is a young organization built on ultra-solid foundation: combining centuries of skills, knowledge, experience and excellent service records in every facet of the airline industry. This foundation gives substantial footing to the fresh group of go-getters who were hired for attitude and trained for skills.

The Cebu Pacific family gather for the blessing of the Airline Operations Center.

To this end, the airline selects people for the natural, God-given qualities innate in them, qualities that support Cebu Pacific's vision and mission, qualities imbibed in the company's work culture. On top of this list is having a true heart and soul for service, closely followed by team-orientation, creativity and persistence, a desire to excel, and a high degree of integrity.

Needless to say, team members undergo training for the knowledge and skills they need to perform their assigned tasks. In addition to this, the airline's culture encourages multi-tasking, as everyone - including executives and managers – are given the opportunity to dip their fingers in other areas of airline operations. The benefit of this is two-way: employees gain additional skills, and the airline has the flexibility to assign individuals to other operational areas when necessary.

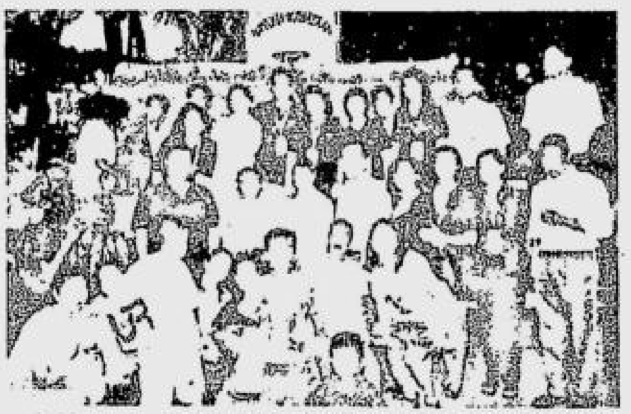
The cabin crew's weekday attire: smart, casual and easy on the eye.

A spirit of family, of volunteerism and teamwork enable the airline to accomplish its goals It is not uncommon to see a teammate from marketing tagging luggage, nor is it unusual to have a pilot or a flight attendant participate in sales blitzes and trade exhibits. There are times when a staff of treasury or accounting conducts internal performance audits, and vice presidents assist passengers at the airport. Each and every member of the airline – from president to rank and file simply roll up their sleeves and help out when needed.

For particular projects, ad hoc committees usually composed of volunteers from various departments, are put together, and this volunteer work is done in addition to normal duties. For instance, an ad hoc committee, dubbed as Task Force 2000, enabled Cebu Pacific to be certified by AQS 9000 / 121 and ISO 9002. Another committee was formed to implement a Crew Resource Management Orientation Workshop that is being offered to everyone in the airline. A Special Events Committee also plans and implements corporate activities the whole year round. There are other committees who continuously enhance safety and customer service in the entire airline. Another group, called "Gotcha," ensures that Cebu Pacific employees always give their best on the job.

The hard work faced by the Cebu Pacific family is made lighter by its ability to have FUN. Though it takes its duties very seriously, the team does enjoy having a good laugh every so often, as having a great sense of humor is another employee pre-requisite. One only has to experience the airline's FUN Flights to appreciate this. Even employees' uniforms are different: a rainbow of colors, various shapes, but always comfortable and more casual than staid. Many times, Cebu Pacific does things differently, just for the fun of it!

CEBU PACIFIC CHRISTMAS 2000
Fun gatherings at Cebu Pacific.


A Christmas celebration the Cebu Pacific way: with the children of "Nayon Ng Kabataan."

Everything that Cebu Pacific has achieved, every hurdle that it has surmounted, was made possible through the values instilled by the airline in its organization: dedication, loyalty, integrity and innovation, all founded on trust. CEB takes steps in maintaining a high-trust organization: reinforcing recruitment processes with group interviews and psychological profiles; spending for teambuilding and behavioral workshops; conducting periodic employee morale surveys, which management takes as seriously as it does customer feedback. Cebu Pacific guards its team spirit with diligence.

One other thing that makes Cebu Pacific the airline that it is today, and the one thing that will continue to propel it forward, is a level of spirituality that acknowledges the power and caring of the Great Almighty. The airline offers masses every first Friday and during special events in its corporate life, opens every major activity with a simple prayer. Cebu Pacific's way of thanking Him for His continued guidance and generosity.

These are some of the stuff that Cebu Pacific is made of. These are some of the stuff that will carry the airline through the new millennium.

CEBU PACIFIC
Lance Gokongwei (front row, second from left), with his top-tier people: (front row, front left) Peggy Vera, Ron Ridgeway, Capt. Johnny Andrews. (Back row):Jenjen Yu, Robin Dui, Manolo San Juan, Tina Trinidad, Dody Ramirez, Art Tuazon, Pat Alcaraz and Joey Macagga.

## CORPORATE OFFICERS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ricardo J. Romulo | - | Chairman |
| John Gokongwei, Jr. | - | Vice Chairman of the Board & Chairman of the Executive Committee |
| Lance Y. Gokongwei | - | President & CEO |
| Ron Ridgeway | - | Managing Advisor |
| Peggy P. Vera | - | VP, Corporate Planning & External Affairs |
| Pascual V. San Juan | - | VP, Marketing |
| Salvador P. Ramirez | - | VP - General Manager, Cargo - Airport Services |
| Jeanette U. Yu | - | VP, Treasury |
| Robin C. Dui | - | VP, Comptroller |
| Arturo G. Tuazon | - | VP, Maintenance & Engineering |
| John C. Andrews | - | VP, Flight Operations |
| Patricio C. Alcaraz | - | VP, International Services |
| Cristina W. Trinidad | - | VP, Inflight Services |
| Joseph G. Macagga | - | VP, Corporate Logistics |

# Cargo's First Year

The recent turn of the century marked another major milestone for this young carrier: the launch of Cebu Pacific's own cargo operations.

With the hopes of opening the new millennium with a highly-positive, income-generating activity, Cebu Pacific took the reign of cargo operations in January 16, 2000.

Its vision: to be the preferred and dominant air cargo carrier in the Philippines and in the region, linking islands together through the exchange of goods, in contribution to the economic growth of the nation.

Thus, the cargo team began its mission of providing prompt, quality and efficient air cargo service to individual shippers and cargo agents. Its aim was to service the most number of destinations in the Philippines and the region, at the most affordable prices, while providing the company with the highest possible level of profitability, in an atmosphere of utmost teamwork and participation. Armed with innovative pricing, efficiency, an extensive distribution system, effective promotions, a potent sales force, and solid support from the management, the group began working towards their goal of hitting 232 million pesos gross revenues by year end.

Cargo offices were immediately set up in all of Cebu Pacific's destinations and cargo operation policies were carefully defined to guarantee maximum convenience for shippers. The team made certain that, first and foremost, Cebu Pacific Cargo is customer friendly, as it offers: value quality service at value plus costs, the right number of frequencies to the right destinations, and simplified procedures and forms for faster processing time.

Secondly, that Cebu Pacific Cargo is reliable. Given the airline's high on-time performance, shippers are assured that their products will arrive in its destination on the expected time.

Thirdly, that Cebu Pacific Cargo is pilfer-free. Individual storage areas were set up to ensure the security of the cargo. Cebu Pacific is the first domestic airline to put in cargo cages for each of its destinations. Likewise, warehouses have separate sections for incoming and outgoing cargo. Cebu Pacific Cargo also introduced certain innovations to the normal cargo industry practices such as the installation of a platform or pancake weighing scale, where the entire cargo volume can be weighed as it is loaded on the cargo cart.

CEBU PACIFIC CARGO

Cebu Pacific Cargo, at the Manila Domestic Airport.

And because concern for its customers is always top of mind, Cebu Pacific is the first cargo firm to offer free refreshments and newspapers to shippers from midnight, until 5 am.

From day one, cargo production exceeded targets, ending the year with cargo volume in its first full year of 22% more than 1999. Its revenues more than doubled at P 251 million, 239% of the previous year's revenue.

Other highlights of this re-invigorated cargo operations is its global link, through alliances with international carriers. Cebu Pacific Cargo entered into special prorate agreements with industry giants, Northwest Airlines and Emirates Airlines. These alliances opened the door to O-S-S. or the One-Stop-Shop service for shippers and freighters. No more dealing with several companies for cargo to and from international destinations.

But for Cebu Pacific Cargo, the best is yet to come.

More service improvements: automation of airway bill processing and a cargo tracking system are all geared toward caring for its customers.

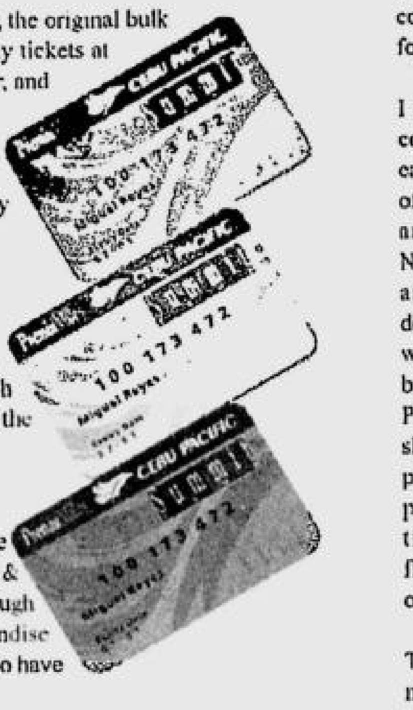
Because it remains faithful to its commitment, and because its people firmly embody the Cebu Pacific spirit, the future does seem bright for Cebu Pacific Cargo.

Cebu Pacific Cargo honors its top producers.

# More Great Values...

Aside from being "the On-Time Airline," Cebu Pacific is also "the Great Value Airline."

With this carrier, value extends beyond efficient transport and warm service. Passengers get more than their money's worth with innovative value products, most of which are Philippine firsts. All these programs – and so much more – make Cebu Pacific the best domestic airline choice. Reliability, service from the heart and value enhancing programs reinforce Cebu Pacific's tagline as the "on time, great value" airline.



Cebu Pacific set a new trend when it introduced the **Commuter Pass**, the original bulk purchase ticket arrangement. By purchasing a booklet of 11 one way tickets at the price of only 10 tickets, passengers are fare protected for one year, and can fly any of the routes in the Visayas or Mindanao sectors. A passenger can simply write his own ticket, call in his booking, and without need of another trip to the airline offices, can proceed immediately to the airport for his flight – even getting an additional benefit of priority baggage handling.

**Hotels Plus** is a program that offers exclusive discounts from the hotels which Cebu Pacific has tie-ups with, at all its destinations. By simply showing their used tickets or boarding passes within 7 days upon arrival, passengers pay as low as 60% off published rates. With this program, Cebu Pacific has made travel even more affordable to the flying public.

**Summit Club** is the country's most rewarding frequent flyer program. Earning PremiuMiles (Summit Club's currency) is so easy it can be earned by taking any Cebu Pacific flight, by staying at partner hotels & resorts, and by using an AIG Visa or Mastercard. Passengers with enough PremiuMiles can redeem flights or exclusive Summit Club merchandise co-branded by Adidas. Summit Club Silver & Gold card members also have access to a lounge in Manila and Cebu airports.

Speaking of frequent flyer programs, Cebu Pacific has also been selected as **Northwest Airline's WorldPerks Program** partner in the Philippines, the most exciting alliance to hit the domestic skies. Now, all Northwest Airlines WorldPerks members can earn miles and redeem award travel on Cebu Pacific flights. That's added great value from Cebu Pacific.

The Summit Club Lounge, where silver and gold members can wait for their flights in comfort.

> *"Cebu Pacific is receptive to, ready to adapt, or even initiate change, all for the benefit of its passengers."*

Cebu Pacific is accessible worldwide thru its participation in Global Distribution Systems: **Abacus**, which handles distribution domestically and within Asia, and in **Sabre** and **Worldspan**, both of which are dominant in the USA and Europe. Cebu Pacific is also part of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) Multilateral Interline Traffic Agreement One-Way (MITA), making reservations and ticket sales readily available in the overseas market.

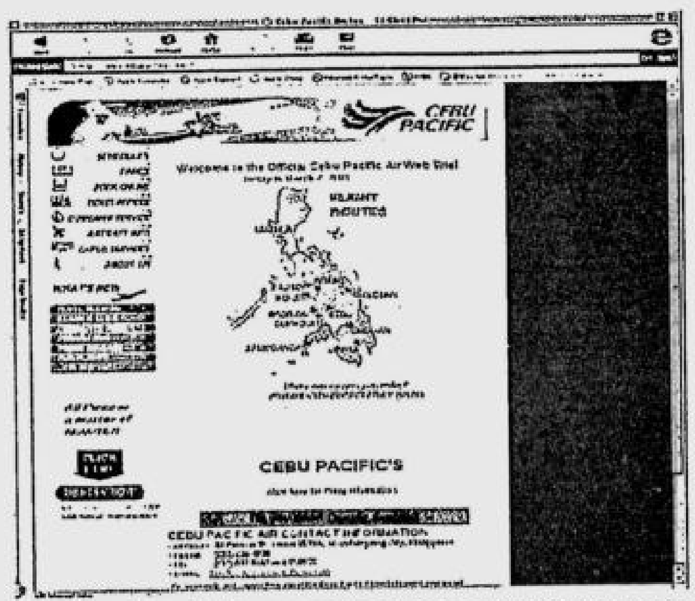
CEB's reservations system is currently hosted in **British Airways/Speedwing systems**, now being managed by Amadeus. Speedwing is considered one of the best reservations, ticketing and departure control systems in the world because it offers total integration among the three systems, allowing for greater efficiencies to the passenger.

**International connections** are made easy with the opening of a service desk at the arrival lobby of the NAIA international airport. The service desk is a one-stop-shop where passengers can book & buy Cebu Pacific tickets. Free shuttle transfers are also provided to international passengers with a ticketed connecting flight with Cebu Pacific or vice versa.

CEBU PACIFIC
On Time, Great Value Airline

International passengers are offered ticketing and booking services and airport transfers right at the NAIA.

To suit the needs of the modern traveler, Cebu Pacific has launched its own website at **www.cebupacificair.com.** Passengers from anywhere in the world, at any time of the day, can now make reservations and pay online. This real time payment gateway is SSL certified by Verisign in the USA, ensuring that credit card details are secure and safe from fraud. Pay Online accepts any Visa, Mastercard or JCB credit card. When you choose to Pay Online, you simply pick up your tickets from the airport ticketing office on the day of your flight.



Welcome to the Official Cebu Pacific Air Web Site!

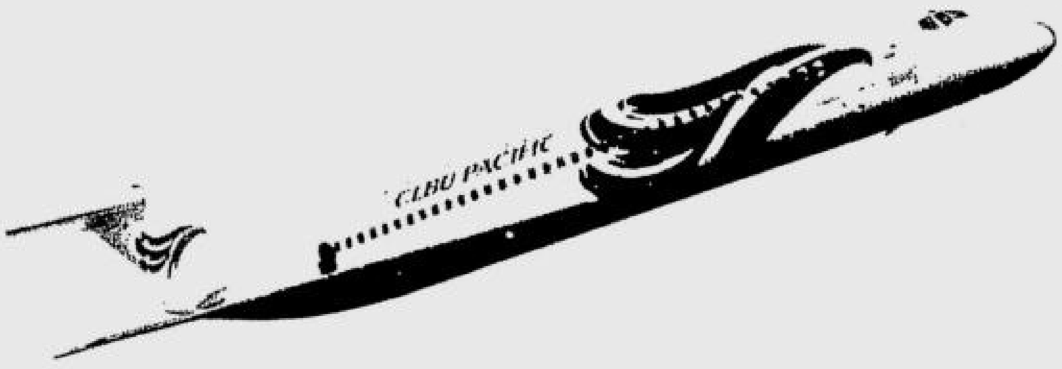
www.cebupacificair.com accepts online bookings and payments.

Innovation is an integral part of Cebu Pacific's thinking process, as the airline always tries to be a step ahead of the times. Because of rapid development in technology and the constant changes in lifestyles, customer requirements and preferences likewise change. To be true to its commitment, as its customers' needs alter, so must the airline. Cebu Pacific is receptive to, ready to adapt, or even initiate change, all for the benefit of its passengers.

Yet throughout all these movements, there is one thing constant that Cebu Pacific works for: that is, to consistently delight its customers with great values, low fares, warm service, safety, reliability, and of course, fun.

PEPSI
ASK FOR MORE

Five
YEARS
of
Fun & Great Service


CEBU PACIFIC

# Congratulations to Cebu Pacific from

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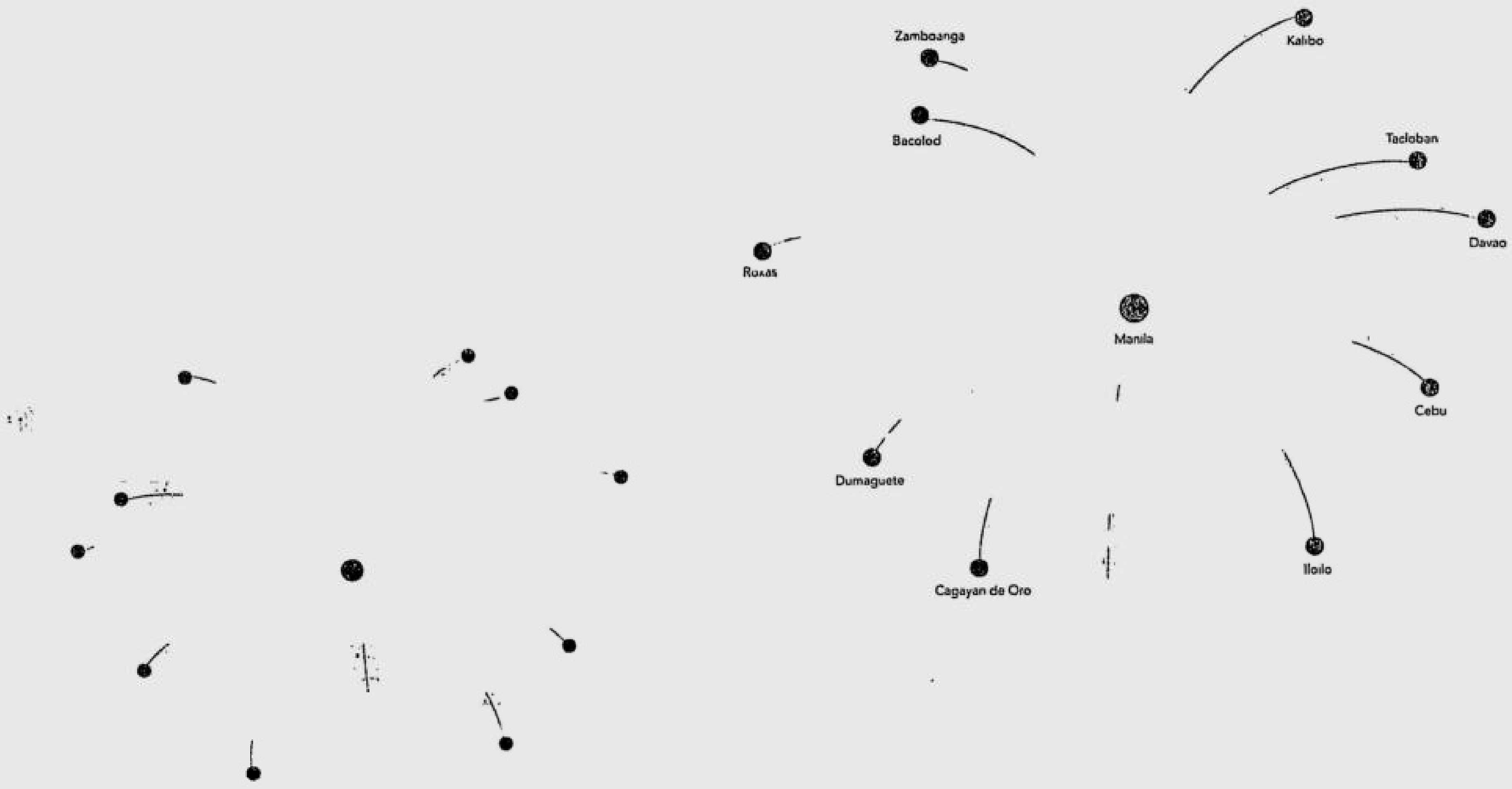
Zamboanga
Kalibo
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There's celebration in the air. Basic Advertising congratulates Cebu Pacific on its 5th year of on-time, great value flights.

Basic ADVERTISING

CEBU PACIFIC